

Mikhail Shereshevsky

The Soviet
Chess
Conveyor



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THE SOVIET CHESS CONVEYOR

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PREFACE

M. Shereshevsky is popular in the chess world as one of the leading coaches in the former Soviet Union, as well as the author of the books "Endgame Strategy" and "Endgame Contours", the second one with master L. Slutsky as a co-author.

Three of his pupils A. Alexandrov, E. Zayac and I. Kadimova became junior champions of the Soviet Union. Believe me, I have been a junior champion myself, this title is one of the hardest to ever achieve.

E. Zayac and A. Kovalev are grandmasters now. A. Alexandrov, P. Korzubov, G. Sagalchik, A. Ryskin, E. Raisky, T. Grabuzova, R. Eidelson, E. Horovetz and T. Zagorskaya are strong national and international masters, whereas I. Kadimova won the World Championship for girls up to 18 years of age.

All these results enable us to talk about the already established "Coaching School of M. Shereshevsky" and you can get a first class impression about it after you read this book. It is my opinion that chess players of all levels will surely find a lot of useful information to be able to improve their chess class.

I read the manuscript of this book, which the author was kind enough to lend me, before the tournament in Tilburg in 1992. I happened to be in perfect friendly relations with the author, ever since I played for the junior team of Bjelorussia, he was coaching then. In my first mini-match with the grandmaster from Litva- E. Rosentalis, the outcome had to be determined in the "time-break", i.e. in games with a time-control of 30 and 15 minutes for each player. I wasn't quite happy with the outcome of the opening stage of the games, I was White in the Nimzovitch Defence. I decided therefore to use the opening 1.d4 ♖f6 2.♗g5, being very much impressed with the chapter "One-game Openings" from this book, in the games with the time-control of 30 and 15 minutes -respectively:
1.d4 ♖f6 2.♗g5 e6 3.e4 h6 4.♗f6 ♖f6 5.♙c3 ♗b4 6.♖d2 d6 7.a3 ♗c3
8.♖c3 ♙c6 9.♙f3 0-0 10.♗d3 ♖e7 11.e5 ♖6 12.ed cd 13.0-0 ♖5 14.♖ae1

♖f6 15.b4 ♘6 16.a4 ♗d8 17.b5 ab 18.ab ♘e7 19.♗a1 ♘d5
20.♗b3 ♘d7 21.♗fe1 ♘h8 22.♗:a8 ♗:a8 23.c4 ♘f4 24.c5 dc
25.♘e5 ♘e8 26.dc ♗d8 27.♘c4 ♗d4 28.♗e3 ♗a1 29.♗f1
♗:f1+ 30.♘:f1 ♗b4 31.c6 bc 32.bc ♘d5 33.♗c1. The rest of the
game was played in a mutual time-trouble, but I managed to
realize my advantage with White.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘g5 e6 3.e4 h6 4.♘:f6 ♗:f6 5.♘c3 g6 6.♗d2
♘g7 7.0-0-0 0-0 8.f4 d6 9.♘f3 b6 10.h4 h5 11.e5 ♗e7 12.♘d3
♘b7 13.♘e4 ♘d7 14.♘fg5 de 15.fe c5 16.c3 cd 17.cd ♗ad8
18.♘b1 ♘b8 19.♘d6 ♗:d6 20.ed ♗:d6 21.♘e4 ♘:e4 22.♘:e4
♗d5 23.♘c3 ♗f5+ 24.♗c2 ♗g4 25.d5 with a decisive
advantage for White.

The course of these two games, despite some mutual imprecisions, unavoidable when you play active - chess, was favourable for White throughout the games. The other players in the Tilburg tournament were so impressed that no one ventured to play 1... ♘f6 against me to the end of the tournament in the games with the quick time-control.

The book is an easy and enjoyable reading. Some passages may seem to you extremely original, some other you may find discussible, but I promise you are going to enrich your understanding of chess tremendously.

B. Gelfand
International Grandmaster



The problems of coaching and improvement in chess have been treated in the chess literature before, but the interest towards these subjects enjoys a real revival lately. This is more than easy to explain. The contemporary erudite chess reader is tempted by the possibility to master new methods of work to improve his class.

I think that the book you are holding in your hands has been written by one of the best Soviet coaches M. Shereshevsky. This book will certainly attract the players who do not want to limit their chess studies to reading only theoretical literature.

M. Shereshevsky, who coached a lot of talented players, boys and girls (I. Kadimova and A. Alexandrov included, who became European and World Junior Champions) shared his coaching experience generously. The book contains plenty of annotated games and original opening variations, as well as general recommendations on the methods of coaching. The author treats the problem of the formation of the opening repertoire of the chess player extensively. M. Shereshevsky thinks that the opening repertoire should comprise the beginning of the work with the young players. This concept is arguable though, but the author does not even try to force his opinion upon you. The material, which constitutes the part of this book devoted to the openings, can present an interesting reading to the young players as well as to the experienced professionals.

Despite the fact that the theme about the openings occupies a central place in this book, the chapters treating the study of the chess classics and the improvement of the endgame technique are written admirably. M. Shereshevsky is the author of two wonderful endgame books ("Endgame Strategy" and "Endgame Contours") and he presents a lot of concrete examples on the way you have to improve your play in the endgames and the way to connect your studies with playing over games of the great chess masters of the past.

A. Yusupov
International Grandmaster

AUTOUR'S PREFACE

"When man has no system in his knowledge, the more he knows, the greatest the mess in his head."

Herbert Spencer

There are a lot of nice chess books about the openings, as well as on problems of the middlegame and the endgame. Numerous books have been written about the methods of coaching the player in some narrow aspect like the technique of calculation of variations and the acquiring of the useful habit to make a plan for the game. I don't happen to know about any book on the methods of improvement of the player who has reached a certain level and would like to become a master.

The author made an attempt in this book to describe his work with the chess players from the level of "first degree" up to the level of an International Master, in the dimension and the stages it had been done in practice. We can compare the coaching of the player with the building of a house and as you know- every person with enough common sense would never start to build without a design. The building will usually be a true copy of the design, while the style of the chess player is rather unpredictable in his development and may fluctuate away from the intentions of the coach, but our comparison was rather abstract. The coach has to be sure however, that he has a definite vision about his intentions and final aims, otherwise his work may not bring anything fruitful. The chess information will form a mess in the head of the pupil and cause only frustration to his soul. I have spent a lot of efforts in team- work with players who devoted 5-6 hours a day to chess, yet they didn't achieve anything substantial, just because their preparation was not planned and thought over beforehand. Afterwards, when there appeared a general direction and concentration upon certain aims, the time they worked on chess was shortened twice and the results were really beneficial. For example, I

started my work with Maya Koen in Bulgaria in the autumn of 1990, when she took the seventh place in the Bulgarian Championship for girls, and she even failed to qualify for the Championship for women. The girl devoted to chess at least 5-6 hours a day. We worked together, following the methods described in this book and in an year she became the Bulgarian Champion for girls, won the silver medal in the Championship for women and the bronze medal in the World Championship for girls. The time she worked on chess decreased about twice, but nevertheless she won the Bulgarian Championship for women and became an International Master.

This book has been addressed mainly to coaches and chess-players that like to work independently. The suggested methods have been tested in practice and proved to bring excellent results. It is based upon my experience of work with chess players from two generations, the majority of which reached the International Master level. I am talking about ordinary players , and not about great chess talents like Boris Gelfand and Vasili Ivanchuk.

Elena Zayac, Alexei Alexandrov and Ilakha Kadimova won the Championship of USSR as well as European and World Junior Titles , having started to work with me as "first-degree"¹ novices.

I would still like to dissuade the reader to expect any immediate results. The coaching of the chess player is a lasting and strenuous job and not a jolly five-minutes blitz game. The longevity of this process depends on the capabilities and the diligence of the student as well as on the experience and the erudition of the coach. Chess is a variable and complex game. You don't have to expect any radical qualitative changes in your play earlier than six months. Keep your patience and desire to improve, even after at first your results in tournament play may deteriorate. I have witnessed this strange phenomenon to occur sometimes, i.e. the new approach to the game brings about a

¹ The system of awarding titles and degrees in all kinds of sports in the former Soviet Union was rather complicated. Regarding chess, you got "degrees" first, starting from fifth to first, and then you became a "candidate-master",

temporary stagnation. For example a gifted tactician thinks over the formation of the plan, something he has never done before, and accordingly he misses a nice tactical opportunity. After some time everything is bound to change and end favourably.

You will begin to solve easily the problems that caused your failures before and you will start to combine strategy with tactics harmoniously. The playing of simple positions and endgames will be as enjoyable to you as the sharp tactical fights. You are going to elevate to a new level of quality in your play, which I hope will lead to an all-out improvement in your practical results.

The eminent American psychologist Dale Carnegie made an interesting observation in his book about public speaking: "... we never advance steadily. We do not improve gradually. We do it by sudden jerks, by abrupt starts. Then we remain stationary a time, or we may even slip back and lose some of the ground we have previously gained. These periods of stagnation or retrogression, are well known by all psychologists; and they have been named "plateaus in the curve of learning". The weak ones give up in despair. Those with grit persist, and they find that suddenly, overnight, without their knowing how or why it has happened, they have made great progress. They have lifted from the plateau like an aeroplane. Abruptly they have gotten the knack of the thing."

These thoughts are applicable to the process of learning in general and chess makes no exception. I have met many times with the moment of lifting from the plateau with a thrill and pride and joy, but it had always been preceded by a long, patient and strenuous work.

Finally I would like to mention that every conscientious coach has his own concepts that are edifying and sometimes maybe discussible. This book does not aim at imposing views of the methods of improvement of the chess player.

The author is sharing with the readers his methodics with the hope it will be useful to the chess coaches and players who would like to perfect themselves single-handedly.

WHAT WOULD YOU START WITH?

You are an experienced and qualified chess-player and you would like to try your best in the field of chess-coaching. Suppose you have met a young and promising chess-player, who has made a strong impression on you. You decide to go on working together. What to start with? The opening! Why do you have to start your work with the opening? It is well known that the deep understanding of the middle-game and the ability to play the endgame well is much more important. The reason is very simple. No chess-player can play successfully in a tournament if he does not have a satisfactory opening repertoire. You can improve in chess only by studying, analysing and playing in tournaments. Therefore, the chess-player must be very well prepared in the opening to be able to start playing in a tournament at any time. Evidently you can never be perfectly prepared, but you can as well try to. Now you can see that a whole lot depends on the chess-player's opening repertoire.

I would like to familiarize the reader with the methods of my work on the problem of choice of openings and studying them with young players, most of which became strong masters in a very short period of time. My final object was to convey to my pupils opening knowledge that might "serve" them for years to come. Moreover the openings that we studied together enabled the young players to work additionally on their own, on middle-game and endgame problems, in connection with the openings we had chosen. All that added a lot to their understanding of the game, in between some very important competitions. The chess-players that worked on the openings in that fashion, needed only to analyse their own games thoroughly, read the current Soviet chess magazines, the "Chess Informant", the Dutch "New In Chess" and could

"feel safe ", even if they had "missed" some important game somewhere. I could not even imagine to treat all my pupils as one. They were all so different in their understanding of chess, in style, as well in their choice of openings on the threshold of entering "the great chess scene". When I started working with them, however, it was inconceivable at the level of "first degree" * to even talk about style of the future chess-player. All I had to understand as a chess-coach was the "likes" and the "dislikes" of the player. I had at first to eliminate his "chess-illiteracy ", give him some idea of the middlegame and the endgame. It is immaterial whether you teach the young player to play Ruy Lopez with Black or The French Defence. What is important for him is to realize and understand the main ideas and strategies. You can generally expect some 18 months later the first "blossoms" of chess culture and style. Now comes the moment of change of the opening repertoire and its enlargement according to style.

To make a long story short, the aim of my work in the opening with the young players can be summarized as following: I try at first to set the foundations of a solid and "long-term use" opening repertoire, and timely setting it aside, to turn my attention entirely on thorough middlegame and endgame preparation.

Choosing Your Opening Repertoire

The opening repertoire of the chess-player can vary and not only accordingly to names of openings, but much more to the method of playing the early stage of the chess game. I would like to clarify my concepts. Suppose the chess-player starts the game with 1.e4.His opponent responds with 1...c5.Now, if White would like to fight for the opening

advantage and initiative, he should play 2.♘f3 and 3.d4. Furthermore, I believe that White should stick to principles, i.e. in the Naidorf he should play 6.♗g5, in the "Dragon" he should play the systems with opposite-side castling and attacks on different wings. If the chess-player doesn't do that, his analytical work would lose its creativity, and he might become an experienced player without reliable opening weapons. In fact something like that happened to grandmaster Sveshnikov, when playing with White. He did not change his opening systems soon enough and went on fighting with "second-rate" armour like The Scottish Game and the "c2 – c3 system" in The Sicilian. He still manages to support systems like that both theoretically and philosophically, but his practical results have been decreasing, since the element of surprise has long gone. The problems that Black must face in those systems are much easier to cope with, than these in Ruy Lopes or the main lines of The Sicilian Defence. On the other hand, Sveshnikov has a very aggressive and excellently conceived and prepared opening repertoire with Black. He seems however incapable to change his repertoire with White, now that he is over 40; the repertoire that served him faithfully for years. I have had a long experience of work in the former USSR and I learned to know what you needed as a coach to score successes with your pupils in competitions as early as in the "kindergarten" stage. You had to try to win the team-championships of the district, the town, the republic, the USSR. That was the least you needed to guarantee yourself peaceful life, wage-increase and status improvement as a coach. In addition, if your pupil managed to win the individual Championship of the USSR for his age (irrelevantly 10,12,14,16,18 or 21), you and your student had the right to play in the World Championship and that secured an interesting and profitable going abroad. The eventual good

result of the young player in the Championship assured the coach of the title "Distinguished Coach of the Republic" and a wage-increase for life. Naturally the importance of the result itself was enormous and you couldn't even talk about "long term" opening preparation. You needed to aim at the result of the game, to win at any rate, and the opening preparation was built alongside superficial opening-trap systems. At the beginning this method was productive but later, with the improvement of the young chess-player and his opponents, the naive opening schemes were turning into a boomerang and the youngster's opening preparation was back at the fetus stage. The coach, however, was usually busy at that moment with tuning new talents on the road to quick success. The player, saddled with ineffectual openings, usually at the level of "master-candidate" had to find a way to cope with the problems by himself. He had a chance only if he had acquired along the way the capability to think critically and analyse positions objectively. He usually had grave difficulties to give up everything learned before and start building anew. That could be done by just a few.

Now lets go back to the move 1.e4 and the Sicilian Defence. I have to emphasize that I think the way White should play this opening should be a matter of principle. Why is that? The answer is rather simple and it lies within the fundamentals of chess itself. The move 1.e4 is just the first step to a quick development of forces, precipitating the fast beginning of an early conflict in most openings. Lets assume that White tries to play a slow positional game in some sharp variation of the Sicilian Defence. That strategy can only be successful against an unprepared and inexperienced opponent. Accordingly, the initiative might be gradually seized by Black. The titanic fight between Kasparov and Karpov is an instructive example. The great master of "slowly" played Sicilians, Karpov (remember his match against Polugaievsky,

back in 1974) couldn't win a single game with 1.e4 in their second match, and gave up playing 1.e4 altogether, starting with the third match. On the other hand, the 1.e4 players, sticking as a matter of principle to the most active systems with White – and apart from The Sicilian there are Ruy Lopez with its sharp schemes Jaenish and Marshall attack, the Open Variation and the different Ruy Lopez Closed lines, The French Defence, The Caro-Cann and a wide range of other systems – can rely on quick success immediately after the opening stage. It is a real challenge to play against such players and not an easy task at that. The problems that Black faces in the 1.e4 openings are much more specific and they require early pinpoint decisions in comparison with the closed opening systems. Nowadays you can categorize Short and A. Sokolov in that group of players, and not long ago R. Fischer, the 11'th World Champion, was an instructive example of the effectiveness of 1.e4. That approach has its drawbacks for certain. Chess-players like that get sometimes trapped deeply into "enemy territory". The opponent might prepare "a novelty" in some sharp opening variation and you have to solve the problems over the board, with the chess-clock ticking along, and most of the times there is no turning back. You have, on top of that, to keep a constant track on the ever increasing flow of chess information, since you can't afford to miss an important novelty in some sharp opening variation. I will show you some games as an example, but the string of illustrations of that very principle can be really endless.

Oli-Gavrikov

Tallin, 1983

***1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cd 4.♗:d4 ♘f6 5.♗c3 a6 6.♙g5 e6
7.f4 ♗b6 8.♗d2 ♗:b2 9.♙b1 ♗a3 10.f5 ♗c6 11.fe fe
12.♗:c6 bc 13.♙e2 ♙e7 14.0-0 0-0 15.♙h1 ♙a7 16.♗e3
♙d7 17.e5 de 18.♗:e5 ♗d6 19.♗a5 ♙d8 20.♗a4 ♗e5***

21.♗:f6 ♗:f6 22.♞f3 c5 23.♗c4 ♞b7 24.♗b3 c4 25.♗:c4
 ♞:b1 26.♜:b1 ♗b7 27.♞f1 ♞e4 28.♞f3 ♗d5 29.♜a3 ♞:f3 0:1

I remember this game rather well. I was coaching P.Korzubov for this tournament ("First League" Championship) and I entered the tournament hall just a little after the beginning of the round. Most of the games had just started and the players had made a few moves, while Oll and Gavrikov were imitating a busy "machine-gun" dot, and the boys could hardly manage with the "demo-board". Not more than 5 minutes were gone, the two opponents had produced about 20 moves each, and it became quite clear, when L. Oll started to think, that White was already past salvation. I am not an expert in this variation, and I can not tell which exactly game the two players were repeating, or where Black made the improvement. As a spectator that day in the tournament hall I couldn't help feeling sorry for the Estonian player. Losing with White in about 5 minutes, without making a single move of your own, while the real battle all around you is just starting, can put you off theoretical disputes for a long time. L. Oll however came out of this story all the wiser, so now let's have a look at his game with Black against A. Sokolov in the USSR championship, Odessa, 1989.



Diagram 1

1.e4 e5 2.♜f3 ♜f6 3.♜:e5 d6
 4.♜f3 ♜:e4 5.d4 d5 6.♗d3
 ♗d6 7.0-0 0-0 8.c4 c6 9.♜c3
 ♜:c3 10.bc dc 11.♗:c4 ♗g4
 12.♞d3 ♜d7 13.♜g5 ♜f6 14.h3
 ♗h5 15.f4 h6 16.g4 hg 17.fg
 b5 18.♗b3 ♜:g4 19.hg ♞d7
 20. gh ♞:g4+ 21.♞f2 ♞ae8
 22.♞g1 ♞h4+ 23.♞g2

The two players were following the game Short – Huebner, Tilburg, 1988 up to now, which ended on the next move. Huebner played 23...c5? and after 24.♖h1! resigned because of the line: 24...♗g4+ 25.♔f1 c4 26.♙d1 ♖e1+ 27.♗:e1 ♗g2 28.♗e2 ♗:h1+ 29.♙d2. Besides that, there was an analysis in the "Chess Informant" 46, where it was proved that White had a decisive advantage after 23...♖e4 as well. L. Oll made another move **23...♗h2+!!**, and after **24.♔f1 ♙f4!** it turned out that it was White who had to fight for a draw. **25.♗f3!** only move, as both 25.♙d1 ♖e1+! and 25.♙:f4 ♗:f4+ 26.♙g2 ♖e3 were losing for White. **25...♖e1+ 26.♗:e1 ♗:g1+ 27.♙e2 ♙:c1 28.♖:c1!** – White sacrifices the exchange to force a draw, since after 28.♙d3 ♗:g5 Black must win. Now after **28...♗:c1 29.g6 ♖e8+ 30.♙d3 ♗b1+ 31.♙d2 ♗e1+ 32.♙d3 ♗b1+ 33.♙d2 ♗e1+** the game ended in a draw. Had Black tried to win with 30...♖e7 (instead of 30...♗b1+), it could all end after 31.gf+ ♔f8 32.♗h3 ♗b1 33.♙c2 ♗:a2 34.♗c8+ ♗:f7 35.♗f5+ in a perpetual.

Psakhis – Tolnai

Dortmund, 1989

1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 d6 3.d4 cd 4.♗:d4 ♗f6 5.♗c3 g6 6.♙e3 ♙g7 7.f3 ♗c6 8.♗d2 0-0 9.g4

Black had tried 9...h5, 9...e5 and 9...♙e6 up to then. L. Psakhis had already played a game with White against I.Smirin, Klaipeda 1988, which went on 9...♙e6 10.h4 d5 11.0-0-0 ♗:d4 12.♙:d4 de 13.g5 ♗h5 14.♙:g7 ♗:d2+ 15.♖:d2 ♗:g7 16.♗:e4 ♖ad8 with about equal endgame. No doubt Psakhis had an improvement up his sleeve, but he was in for a nasty surprise



Diagram 2

9...♙g4! The effect of that sacrifice was something like the burst of a "Molotov cocktail". The true assessment of that novelty lied well far in the future, but in this particular game (comments by the winner in the "Chess Informant" 47), White put up virtually no resistance

although the rating difference between the two players was more than 100 points in favour of White. After **10.fg ♖:g4 11.♙g1 e6 12.h4 h5 13.♜:c6 bc 14.♙e2 ♙e6 15.♙d3 ♜e5 16.♙g3 ♚b8 17.b3 ♙a5 18.♚d1 ♙g7 19.♚:d6 ♚bd8 20.♚:d8 ♚:d8 21.♞f1 ♚d2 22.♚h3 ♜g4 23.♙b8+ ♞h7 24.b4 ♙a3 25.♙:a7 ♙c1+ 26.♞g2 ♙:c3 27.♚:c3 ♚e2+ 28.♞g3 ♙e1+ 29.♞f3 ♙f1+** White resigned.

In conclusion now, let's have a look at two wins of the Hungarian grandmaster **L. Portisch** with Black in Ruy Lopez:

Sax – Portisch Scellefteo, 1989



Diagram 3

1.e4 e5 2.♜f3 ♜c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 d6 5.c3 ♙d7 6.d4 ♜ge7 7.♙b3 h6 8.♜bd2 ♜g6 9.♜c4 ♙e7 10.♜e3 ♙g5 11.♜:g5 hg 12.g3

12...ed! 13.cd ♞f8! – that is a new plan for Black in this position, with the intention to attack White's centre with ♙h3,

♖d7 and ♜e8, not to mention ♜h8 and the "h" line.

14.0-0 ♗h3 15.♖f3 ♖d7 16.♗d1 ♜e8 17.♘f5? L. Portisch suggested in his comments in the "Chess Informant" 48 that White should have played here 17.♙c2 ♜ge5! 18.de ♜:e5 19.♖e2 g4 20. f4 gf 21.♖f2 ♗g2 22.♜:g2 (but not 22.h4? ♜g4 23.♜:g4 ♖:g4) 22...♞:h2! 23.♙:h2 ♜g4+ 24.♙g1 ♜:f2 25.♙:f2 fg 26.♙:g2 ♖c6 27.♙d3 ♞:e4! 28.♙:e4 ♖:e4+ 29.♙g1 ♖f3 30. ♙f4 g5 ! with a draw.

Most probably L.Portisch had analysed that position at home extensively, while Sax had to look for his way through the complications in the severe tournament conditions. After White's last mistake, he was crushed:

17...g4 18.♖e3 ♜h5 19.♘h4 ♞:h4 20.gh ♜:h4 21.♙d5 ♜e7 22.♙c4 (or 22.♙:b7 ♜f3+ 23.♙h1 ♜f5 24.♖c3 ♜5h4 25.♗g1 ♖b5 26.♙c6 ♖f1+! L. Portisch)

22...♘ef5 23.♖c3 ♞:e4 24.♙f1 ♜:d4 25.♙e3 ♜df3+ 26.♙h1 ♙:f1 27.♞:f1 ♜g6 28.♗ad1 ♖e7 White resigned.

N.Short probably intended to improve White's game playing against L.Portisch in the tournament in Linares 1990, since he repeated the first 14 moves. It is not easy to speculate what N.Short had prepared against the line 14...♗h3 etc. but it was not to be.



Diagram 4

L.Portisch played **14...♖f6!?** instead and seized the initiative. **15.♙d5 ♖:d4 16.♙:g5 ♜ge5 17.♙e3 ♖:d1 18.♙:d1 ♗h3 19.♞e1 ♜d3 20.♞e2 ♜ce5 21.♗d2 ♜e1 22.f4 ♜1f3+ 23.♙f2 ♜:d2 24.♙:d2 ♜g4+ 25.♙g1 c6 26.♜b6 ♞e8 27.♙f3 ♜f6 28.♞e1 ♙g4 29.♙g2 ♙e6**

30.b3 ♖d7 **31.♗a4** f5 **32.♙c3** fe **33.♖:e4** ♖f6 **34.♗d4** ♙d5
35.♙f1 ♖g4 and White resigned.

Grandmaster S. Makaritchev, a brilliant chess-journalist and commentator, was annotating game 6 of the World Championship Match 1990 between Kasparov and Karpov. He wrote in the "Shakhmatnoe Obozrenie – 64" magazine, 23, 1990: "You ask yourself involuntarily, while watching the struggle of the two greatest players of our time, what is the correlation between the profound chess philosophy and the simple earthly practice."

"You play 1.e2–e4 and win!" – the famous Soviet theoretician Rauzer proclaimed and...developed a lot of systems of attack for White that are still very popular now, 60 years after. Grandmaster Sveshnikov considers that it is only by means of this move that White can achieve opening advantage. Why? How? The problem is neither easy to make sense of, nor possible to check...Still, the personal hunch of most of the chess players is in favour of 1.e4, indeed. The King's pawn move requires a very serious attitude in preparation and playing to the limit over the board by its exponents. The only motto of White should be "Forward, and forward only" since compromising in the opening can lead to disaster and disappointments."

The reader should be convinced by now that the problems facing White players are really serious, when they are confronted with a novelty in sharp opening variations. I am not trying to dissuade the young players away from principal sharp moves. On the contrary, such a manner of playing cultivates resourcefulness and deserves merit. Still I must emphasize that an approach like that requires working over an enormous flow of information and takes away time of vital necessity for studying the endgame, the chess-classics and the variety of other ways to improve.

The move 1.d4 is not so aggressive in its essence, as the King's pawn move. Still, in most lines when White plays principally, Closed Opening's positions that arise are rich in strategic ideas which is essential for the development of the understanding of positional play by the young player. It is much easier for the player to choose lines suitable to his style in the King's Indian i.e. the sharp Saemisch system, or the less obliging g2-g3 system, or after 1.d4 ♟f6 2.c4 e6 he might choose 3.♟c3 and play Nimzo-Indian or 3.♟f3 which is calm and leads to the Queen's Indian. Both decisions are equivalent, while in the Sicilian-Dragon you have to attack, playing White's side.

I think that the explanation of this is in the essence of the chess game. The move 1.d4 does not require necessarily the swiftest of developments, and White has a multiple choice of methods of opening strategy suitable to the style and temper of the chess-player. Remember we set ourselves the pragmatic task of development of opening repertoire for the young player in a short period of time. That repertoire should be part of the fundamentals of his chess education and should provide him ample opportunities to study the other parts of the game. It is my deep conviction that **1.d4** is the better solution to this problem than 1.e4, although I believe that future belongs to players that will play both.

So we made our choice – **1.d4**. You can expect two kinds of opening strategy of Black which is easy to differentiate as "black square" (Black surrenders the center – 1.d4 ♟f6 2.c4 g6 3.♟c3 ♟g7 or 1.d4 ♟f6 2.c4 c5 and then attacks it on the black squares) and "white square". The Nimzo-Indian Defence and the Queen's Indian Defence are part of it. The different modifications of the Queen's Gambit occupy a large part of the theory of the Closed Openings. The Dutch Defence and the Gruenfeld Defence form another peculiar breed.

I personally classify the Closed Opening Systems in two groups – “quality” openings or correct openings and openings of poor quality. It is my opinion that the first group consists of: the Nimzo-Indian Defence, the other opening systems that arise after 1.d4 ♠f6 2.c4 e6 3.♠f3, the different lines of the Queen’s Gambit and the King’s Indian Defence. Black is fiercely fighting for central squares’ control in all those openings, except the King’s Indian, and enjoys a large margin of reliability. It is almost impossible to imagine that White can produce some overwhelming novelty in some line of the Lasker System in the Queen’s Gambit or in the Nimzo-Indian, that can refute the opening entirely...Naturally, a lot of opening lines take part in the everlasting process of improvement and specification. Sometimes here and there Black’s position looks in real trouble, but generally, Black should always hold a safe enough line up his sleeve, although sometimes a passive one, while the main line is in “the service-station” for repair. The Gruenfeld Defence and the Modern Benoni create more or less different scene. Black is actively fighting for the initiative in these openings, making in the process serious positional concessions in the center. White players can choose a line at leisure, having the freedom to suit it best to their liking and style. White can follow some very sharp lines, which require excellent knowledge of theory by Black in positions that hinge on a thread, or play quite positional schemes that make Black solve problems intricate enough, although less specific. It is understandable that Black has to follow all the opening information flow, because some new and important game might turn the tables up with disaster in practice. The Queen’s Gambit, on the contrary, provides you with safety against all kinds of surprises, since you can almost always cope with them just by means of common sense. The real danger, when you play openings like that, lies in the absence of “reserve

lines". You just have to stop playing an opening like that in case some sharp line gets temporarily refuted. Presently the Modern Benoni and the Gruenfeld Defence are playable (World Champion Kasparov played the latter in his three matches for the World Title, not too successfully though, (+1 – 6 =16), but I still consider these two as openings of poor quality because Black is under the permanent threat of having to confront problems in the different lines impossible to cope with.

Now, finally there are some openings that can not even aspire for the mark of quality, like: the Albin Countergambit, the Budapest Gambit, the Tchigorin Defence, 1.d4 d5 2.c4 ♟f5 and some others as well. I usually start my opening preparation with the young players dealing with them first, since they are easy to look over rather quickly.

I am not going to fully analyse some exact opening repertoire in this book, but I still intend to clarify most of the key points of my work.

Now lets talk a little about the openings of poor quality. They can not comprise the permanent basis of the repertoire of the player, they are played rarely and aim at the effect of surprise. Therefore I wouldn't like to waste my efforts on their refutation, that is spending time in vain, really. I think that it is much more important to try to make the effect of surprise work for you instead, and set the game along some comfortable line of your own. Lets start with the Albin Countergambit. After the moves **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5!? 3.de d4** the theory considers best 4.♟f3 and promises White the advantage after for example 4...♟f3 ♟c6 5.a3 (5.♟bd2) ♟g4 6.b4 ♟e7 7.♟a4 0-0-0 8.♟f4 ♟:f3 9.gf ♟b8 10.♟d2 ♟:e5 11.♟b3 ♟g6 12.♟g3 f5 13.f4 The efforts of Black are pointed at finding improvements along these lines as well. Therefore it is much more rewarding to try in practice something that might not be the best but which is certainly unfamiliar for the opponent.

You should have in mind that good players don't play openings like that. So let's have a look at **4.a3!**? I was coaching the Bjelorrussia students' team for the all Soviet Spartakiada in 1970. One of the girls in our team G.Gull played 4.e3? and after 4...♠b4+ 5.♠d2 de etc. was lost. She played 4.a3!? in the next game, after this bitter experience. I analysed the games of the tournament and noticed the move 4.a3. I found out that it deserved serious attention. White postpones for a while the development of the King's knight, prevents ♠b4 and ♠g4 and resumes with the threat e2 – e3. There seems to be nothing better than 4...♞c6, since 4...c5 will be met by 5.e4. Now comes **5.e3**. The most natural answer is 5...de, because White plays to 5...a5 – 6.♞f3 ♠c5 7.ed ♞:d4 8.♠e3 ♠g4 9.♠e2 with the advantage. **6.♞:d8+ ♞:d8** (otherwise Black is left with a pawn down) **7.♠:e3 ♞:e5**



Diagram 5

White has achieved a definite success. Black is usually aiming at complications with attacking chances in the Albin Counter-gambit. Now Black has to fight for an equality with the queens changed. The position is symmetrical. White has the better development and must find the way to seize the

initiative. **8.♞f3!** The only active Black piece is the knight on e5, so it has to be changed. This has to be done immediately since 8.♞c3 will be met by 8...♠e6, or 8.♞d2 ♠f5 with counterplay, because of the position of ♞e5 in the center. **8...♞:f3+ 9.gf.** The chess-players are used to counting tempi, after the initial position, ever since the time of Steinitz. If we decide to evaluate the position in this way, we are going to see that Black has made a rather inferior move ♞d8, while

White has made three pawn moves and a useful developing Bishop move. Besides that, White is going to castle soon on the Queen side with check.

I believe that the reader will get easily convinced that after 10.♖c3, 11.0-0-0 and 12.♗e4 Black will have the difficult task to fight for the draw. No doubt Black might, after a thorough analysis, find a way to gradually neutralize White's initiative. Don't forget however that we are not preparing the challenger for the World Title, but a young player. We don't expect him to crush the opponent right after the opening. We want him to obtain a complicated position on a sound strategic basis and rely to win due to good play in the middlegame and the endgame as well. We intend to go back to the opening preparation as rarely as possible, so this approach is highly recommendable.

A. Kapengut, who is "Honourable coach of Bjelorussia" wrote about his common work with grandmaster I. Boleslavsky in "64 – Shakhmatnoe Obozrenie" 21 in 1990:

"We had a lot of disputes with him on the different approaches to the creative work in the opening. I thought I had to have all the material, published on that topic, collected and thought over. And then, just like when you develop a photo, you begin to see the plans, the landmarks, the ideas for an article or the conclusions for the practical player. Boleslavsky (a member of the old school) preferred to approach the position directly, extensively. His method enabled him to find a lot and he was the standard of a theoretician. He had his weak points, however. Whenever some of his analysis were refuted, his readers were at a loss. They had nothing else to rely on".

I have been working with grandmaster Boleslavsky a lot myself, from 1967 till 1977. I can acknowledge too, that whenever he met some interesting problem he literally started the engine of his powerful "analytical machine" and was ready

to devour the position. He was, of course, more than familiar with all the chess periodicals. He was a real connoisseur of the classics (and not only the chess-classics) and he was looking over all the games of the major tournaments. Isaac Boleslavsky was avert however to all kinds of card-indexes, catalogues, sorting games according to opening indexes and whatever mechanical work. He deeply believed in his analytical faculties and rightfully assumed that he will have much better results by having thoroughly studied and analysed the position, than by looking over games of mediocre players with the hope to find the answer to the secrets hidden in the position. It is desirable nowadays, on the grandmaster level, to work over the vast amount of information, often with the help of a computer. But still, the information is necessary to prevent you not "to invent the bicycle all over again". The analysis and the constant vigil for novelties remain the chess-player's main job.

The method of work on the openings, recommended by Kapengut, is in fact more productive when you work with a high-level player who has his own style, his preferences and who is capable to distinguish the true from the false in a flash, making logical deductions in the process. Applying this method in our case is out of the question.

Some time ago, I had the idea to try to include the Modern Benoni, for Black, in the opening repertoire of the players

I was working together with. I suggested they studied the book written by Kapengut on this opening, starting with **1.d4** **2.f6** **3.c4** **4.e6** **5.f3** **6.c5** **7.d5** **8.ed** **9.cd** **10.d6** **11.c3** **12.g6** **13.d2** **14...bd7**.

Black is trying to prevent **15.c4** and **16.f4** ever since the famous



game Nimzovich – Marshall, New York 1927.

Sometimes Black is playing differently i.e. :

➤ **1) 7...b5** which is hardly recommendable – 8.♖:b5 ♘:d5 9.♘c4 ♗b7 10.e4 a6 11.♘b:d6+ ♗:d6 12.ed 0-0 13.♗e2 ♖e8 14.♗e3 ♗f8 15.♗f3 ♗h4 16.♗b3! ♖a7 17.0-0 ♗a8 18.♖ac1 ♘d7 19.♖fd1 ± (Messing – Sibarevic, Chatetzka Teplice, 1968).

➤ **2) 7....b6!?** is insufficient – **8.e4**.

White tried 8.e3 in the game Boleslavsky – Tal, Leningrad 1956 (with transposition) and after 8...♗g7 9.♘c4 0-0 10.♗e2 ♗a6 11.a4 ♗:c4 12.♗:c4 ♘bd7 13.0-0 ♖e8 14.♗c2 ♗e7 15.♖b1 ♘g4 16.h3 ♘ge5 17.♗e2 c4 18.b4 cb 19.♗:b3 ♘c5 20.♗a3 ♖ac8 21.♗d2 f5 =.

Now, after 8.e4 if Black continues with his development, the d6 pawn becomes weak, otherwise things get even worse:

8...♗g7, or 8...♘fd7 9.♘c4?! (9.a4±) ♗a6 10.♗f4 ♗:c4 11.♗:c4 a6 12.a4 ♗e7 13.0-0 ♗g7 14.♗d2 0-0 was played in the game Sokolsky – Hallibeyli, Erevan 1954. White had to play now 15.♖fe1 ♘e5 16.♗f1 ♘bd7 17.♗g3 g5 18.♘d1 f5 19.ef ♖:f5 20.♘e3 ♖f7 21.♘c4 h6 22.♖a3 ±.

9. ♗b5+!

Borisenko – Arseniev, Perm 1960: 9.♘c4?! 0-0 (9...♗a6!?) 10.♘:d6+ ♗:d6 11.♗:a6 ♘:a6 12.♗a4+ b5! 13.♘:b5 ♗d7 14.♗:a6 ♘:e4 is unclear, but White should play 10.♗a4+ ♗f8 11.♖f4 ♗:c4 12.♗:c4 ♘h5 13.♗e3 ♘d7 ±) 10.♗f4 b5?! 11.♘:b5 ♘:e4 12.♗d3 ♗a6 13.a4 ♗:b5 14.ab ♘f6 15.0-0 ♘bd7 16.♗:d6 ±.

Black could improve with 10...♗a6!. Both 11.♘:d6? ♘h5, as well as 11.♗:d6? ♖e8 12.♗:b8 ♘:e4 look bad, but even after 11.a4 ♗:c4 12.♗:c4 ♖e8 13.f3 (13.♗d3 ♘:e4!?) 13...♘h5 14.♗e3 f5 15.♗d2 ♘d7 Black has an excellent game.

9...♠d7 10.♠e2 The game Moiseev – Shaposhnikov, Riga 1954 went on 10...0-0 11.0-0 ♖e8 12.a4 ♜c8 13.♖c4 ♖d7 14.f4 ♖b8 15.♠f3 a6 16.♗e2 with a big advantage for White.

➤ **3) 7...♖a6?!** has been played as well. **8.♖c4 ♖c7 9.a4 b6 10. e4**

or **10.♠g5?!** like in the game Koshtchuk – Meduna, Bialostok 1979, the “Chess Informant” 27, 10...♠e7 11.♠h6 (but not 11.e4 ♖:e4!) 11...♖g4 12.♠f4, and now Black had to play 12...f5! =, instead of 12...0-0 13.h3 ♖f6 14.e4 ♠a6 15.♗b3 threatening 16.0-0-0 with decisive advantage.

10...♠a6.

Black tried to prepare b6 – b5, postponing the King side development, in the game Levit – Evelsohn, Perm 1956: 10...♖b8 11.♠e2 a6 12.♠f4 b5. White had to play now 13.ab ab 14.♖a5! ♠d7 15.♖c6 ♠:c6 16.dc with much better game.

After 10...♠a6 White obtained a decisive advantage in the game Estrada – Donner, Vama 1962: 11.♠g5 h6 12.♠h4 ♠:c4 13.♠:c4 ♠g7 14.0-0 0-0 15.f4 ♗d7 16.e5 ♖h7 17.e6+.

➤ **4) 7...a6?! 8.a4 ♠g7** is clearly in White’s favour.

Black can try 8...♖bd7, but White now has a manoeuvre typical for the fianchetto system – 9.♖c4 ♖b6 10.♖a3!?

The game A.Petrosian – Kovacevic, Albena 1980, continued 10...♠d7 11.e4 ♠g7 12.♠e2 0-0 13.0-0 ♖e8 14.♠f3 ♗c7 15.♖e1. Black should have played now 15...♖b8 (but not 15...♖a4?! 16.♖:a4 b5 17.♠f4±) 16.♠f4 (or 16.a5 ♖c8 17.♖c4 ♖b5) 16...♖c8 17.♗d3 ♠:a4 with about equal position.

9.♖c4 0-0 10. ♠f4 ♖e8 11.♗d2

A.Petrosian played against Karlsson, Erevan 1980. the “Chess Informant” 30, the inferior 11.♖e4?! ♖d7! 12.♠:d6 (or 12.♖ed6?! ♖:d6 13.♠:d6 ♖e8 with excellent compensation) 12...♖:d6 13.♖e:d6 ♖b8 14.a5 b5 15.ab ♖:b6 16.♗d2 ♖:c4 17.♖:c4 ♖b4 18.e3 ♠b7 19.♖d1 and now A.Petrosian recommends 19...♗a5!? =.

11...f5

The pawn sacrifice is insufficient 11...d7!? 12.d:d6 d:e5 13.d:e8 e:e8 14.e3 g5. The game Yanakiev – Pantaleev, Sofia 1976, went on 15.fg3?! f5 16.0-0-0 ? b5! 17.f:e5 f:e5 18.ab ab 19.f:b5 f:d7#. Much better is 15.f:e5 f:e5 16.g3 f5 17.fg2 f4 18.0-0±.

12.a5 c:c7 13.d:b6 e:a7 and now instead of 14.e3 d:d7 15.dca4 d:ef6 16.h3 g5! 17.f:h2 f4 18.ef gf 19.f:e2 f:h6 20.0-0 d:e5, like in the game Thorgbergsson – Hamman, Linnköping, 1969. White has to play simply 14.g3!±.

It becomes clear now that the addition of a6 and a2 – a4, in comparison with variation 3, is clearly in favour of White, because of the weak "b6" square. Besides that, Black has deprived himself of the opportunity to exchange White's knight on c4, by means of f:a6.

So, 7...d:b7 8.e4.

8.d:c4?! d:b6 9.e4 does not trouble Black at all. (9.d:b6?! c:b6 10.e4 f:g7 11.f:b5+ d:d7 12.c:a4 a6 13.f:d2 c:c7 14.0-0 0-0 15.f:e2 e:b8 = was hardly convincing in the game Kavda–Chekhov, Caracas 1976. The transposition to the fianchetto system with 9.d:e3?! f:g7 10.a4 c:e7 11.a5 d:b7 12.g3 0-0 13.f:g2 e:b8 14.h3 b5 15.ab d:b6 16.0-0 does not pose any problems to Black either, as in the game Yanakiev – Antonov, Sofia 1976. Black has an excellent game after 16...d:h5 17.g:h2 f5 18.f4 d:f6)

9...d:c4 10. f:c4 f:g7 11.0-0 0-0 12.f:f4 and now 12.h3?! seems too slow: 12...a6 13.a4 e:e8 14.e:e1 d:h5! 15.c:d2 c:h4. 15...f:e5!? looks even better –16.c:g5 c:g5 17.f:g5 d:f4#.

Black has to play much more precisely after 12.f:g5!?

Zhidkov – Lomaja, Tbilisi 1962: 12...e:e8 13.c:c2 a6 14.a4 c:c7 15.h3 d:d7 16.e:f1 and now the game went on 16...d:b6

17.♠f1 ♖d7 18.♙d2 ♚ab8 19.♘d1 ♜c8 20. ♘e3 b5 =, but 16...♘e5 17.♠f1 h6 and g6 – g5 next was interesting as well.

Inkiöv– Antonov, Varna 1977: 12...h6 13.♠h4 g5!? 14.♙g3 a6 15.a4 ♚e8 16.♙d3 c4 17.♙c2 ♚b8 18.a5 b5 19.ab ♚:b6 20.♚a2 ♘g4 21.h3 ♘e5 22.♙h5 ♘g6 23.♘a4 ♚b4 24.e5!±. Black had to play 16...♘g4 17.h3 ♘e5, for example 18.f4?! ♘:d3 19.♙:d3 ♙b6 20.♙h2 ♙:b2!? 21.♚ac1 c4! 22.♙:c4 ♠:h3=.

12...a6 13.a4 ♘h5!

13.♚e8...is also possible. 14.♙c2 ♙c7 15.♚ae1 ♙d7 lead to equality in E.Fisher – Soos, Natanya 1965. White has nothing after 16.h3 ♚b8 17.♙d3 ♠:a4!.

14.♙e3 f5!?

Black played 14...♚e8 in the game Gligoric – Trifunovic, Sombor 1957, and equalised after 15.♙d2 ♚b8 (15...♠:c3!? 16.♙:c3 ♚:e4∞) 16.♚fe1 ♙d7 17.a5 b5 18.ab ♚:b6 19.♚ae1 ♙b7=.

15.ef is playable in this position. (15.♙e2 f4 16.♙d2 ♙g5 is in Black's favour.) 15...♠:f5. Now 16.g4?! does not seem reliable after 16...♙h4 17.♙e2 (17.gf ♙:c4) 17.♚ae8 18.gf ♚:e3! 19.fe ♙e5 20. ♚f2 ♚:f5 –+.

Back to 7...♘bd7 8.e4 ♙g7 **9.♘c4**.

A lot of players prefer this order of moves just to avoid the systems in which Black plays ♙g4 etc. The usual move here is 9.♙e2. It leads to the main lines of the Modern Benoni.

9...♘b6

9...♙e7 is interesting. **10.♙e2**

10.♙d3?! is nothing special. 10...0-0 11.0-0 ♘e5 12.♘e3 ♘fg4 13.♘:g4. The best line for Black now is 13...♠:g4 14.f3 ♘:d3 15.♙:d3 ♙d7. 13...♘:g4 was played in the game Marshalek–Novak, Czechoslovakia 1956: 14.h3 ♘e5 15.♙e2 f5 16.ef?! ♠:f5 17.♙e3 a6 18.a4 ♚ae8 19.♙d2 ♙h4. White had to play 16.f4! ♘f7 17.ef ♠:f5 18.♙f3±.

After the text move the position is rather similar to the main line with $\text{d}a6$. The game Gorelov – Khasin, Moscow 1978, follows: **10...0-0** 11.f3 (11.0-0 b5!) 11... $\text{d}e5$ 12. $\text{d}e3$ a6 13.a4 $\text{b}b8$ 14.0-0 $\text{d}e8$ 15. $\text{c}h1$ f5 16.ef gf 17.f4 $\text{d}f7$ 18. $\text{b}f3$ $\text{d}h6$ 19. $\text{a}d2$ \pm .

Black can improve with 13.... $\text{d}h5$!? and now 14.0-0 $\text{d}f4$ =, or 14.g3 f5 15.f4 $\text{d}:f4$!? 16.gf $\text{c}h4$ + 17. $\text{c}d2$ $\text{c}:f4$ +.

10. $\text{d}e3$ 0-0



Diagram 7

11. $\text{a}d3$

> 1) **11. $\text{a}e2$** is weaker, since Black plays **11... $\text{c}e7$!** attacking the "e4" pawn immediately.

The game Ruderfer – Tataev, Moscow 1971 (with 8....a6 9.a4 included) continued **12... $\text{a}d7$** 13.0-0 $\text{b}e8$ 14.f3 $\text{b}b8$ 15.a5 $\text{d}c8$ 16. $\text{d}c4$ $\text{d}h5$ 17.f4!?

$\text{a}d4$ + 18. $\text{c}h1$ $\text{a}:c3$!? 19.bc $\text{b}:e4$ 20. $\text{d}d2$ $\text{b}e8$ 21. $\text{a}:h5$ ∞.

12. $\text{c}c2$ $\text{a}d7$

12... $\text{b}e8$ is possible as well – 13. $\text{a}f3$ $\text{d}bd7$ 14.a4 b6 15.0-0 $\text{a}a6$ 16. $\text{b}e1$ c4 17. $\text{d}b5$ $\text{d}e5$ 18. $\text{d}c4$ $\text{d}:f3$ + 19.gf $\text{a}:b5$ 20. ab $\text{d}:d5$ ∞, Kishnev – Vekshenkov, Moscow 1979.

13.a4

Or 13.0-0 $\text{b}ae8$ 14.f3 $\text{d}h5$ 15.f4?! $\text{a}:c3$! 16. $\text{c}:c3$ $\text{c}:e4$ 17. $\text{a}:h5$ gh 18. $\text{c}f6$ $\text{c}d4$ 19. $\text{c}g5$ + $\text{c}h8$ 20. $\text{b}d1$ f6 \mp , A. Petrosian – Kapengut, Minsk 1973.

13... $\text{b}ae8$ 14.a5?! (14. $\text{a}f3$ h5 15.h3 $\text{d}h7$ \mp)

14... $\text{d}a8$ 15. $\text{a}d3$ $\text{d}c7$ 16.0-0 $\text{d}a6$ 17. $\text{d}c4$ $\text{d}b4$ 18. $\text{c}d1$ $\text{d}:d3$ 19. $\text{c}:d3$ and now Black must play 19... $\text{d}:e4$ 20. $\text{d}:e4$ (20. $\text{b}e1$ $\text{d}:f2$!) 20... $\text{c}:e4$ 21. $\text{c}:e4$ $\text{b}:e4$ 22. $\text{d}:d6$ $\text{b}b4$ \mp .

> 2) **11.g3** deserves serious attention. **11...a6.**

Or 11...*B*e8 – Anishchenko–L.Levit, Minsk 1974: 12.*A*g2 a6 13.0-0 *W*c7?! 14.a4 *B*b8 15.a5 *Q*a8 16.*Q*x4 *Q*d7 17.*A*f4 *Q*e5 18.*Q*:e5 *A*:e5 19.*A*:e5 *B*:e5 20.f4 *B*e8 21.e5±.

11...*Q*bd7 – Osnos – Karpeshov, Novorossiysk, 1981: 12.*A*g2?! (12.a4) 12...b5! 13.a3 (13.*Q*:b5 *W*a5+ 14.*Q*c3 *A*a6±) 13...b4 14.*Q*e2 a5 15.*B*a2 *A*a6 16.b3 *B*e8 17.f3 *Q*e5 18.0-0 *W*b6 19.*Q*h1 c4!±.

White can still play, in the spirit of the fianchetto system,

12.*A*g2 *B*b8 13.a4 *Q*a8 14.*Q*c4 *Q*e8 (Or 14...b5? 15.ab ab 16.*Q*:d6!? *W*:d6 17.*A*f4±; 16.*Q*a5±), and now 15.0-0 *Q*b6 16.*Q*a3 *A*d7 (16...*Q*:a4?! looks bad after 17.*Q*:a4 b5 18.*Q*:c5±) 17.a5 *Q*c8 18.*Q*c4 *A*b5 19.*W*d3 *A*:c4! (but not 19...*Q*c7 20. b3±) 20.*W*:c4 *Q*c7± or 15.a5 *Q*ac7 16.*Q*a4 *Q*b5 17.0-0 *Q*d4 18.*Q*ab6 *Q*ec7 19.f4 ±.

Black can try to prevent the fianchetto, playing

10...*W*e7. The game Anishchenko – Birin, Minsk 1980, (the moves a6 and a4 were played as well) went on 12.*W*c2 0-0 13.g3 *B*e8 14.*A*g2 *B*b8 15.0-0 *Q*bd7 16.*Q*c4 *Q*e5 17.*Q*:e5 *W*:e5 18.*A*f4 ±, but Black could have played better 13...*Q*g4! =.

However if White plays 11.*A*d3! Black doesn't have the plan of counterplay that we have just seen.

11...*B*e8.

➤ 11...*Q*h5 12.g3!?

Or 12.0-0, and now

1) Nimzovic – Marshall, New York 1927: 12...*A*e5?! 13.a4 *Q*f4 14.a5 *Q*d7 15.*Q*c4! *Q*:d3 16.*W*:d3f5 17.ef *B*:f5 18.f4 *A*d4+ 19.*A*e3±. 12...*Q*f4!? immediately, was much stronger: 13.a4 *Q*:d3 14.*W*:d3 *B*e8 15.a5 *Q*d7 16.f4 *A*d4 17.*Q*h1 *Q*f6 ±.

2) Gerusel – Halleröth, Toronto 1957, 12...*W*e8 (12...*A*h3? 13.*W*f3! threatening 14.g4) 13.*Q*b5?! (White has a clear advantage after 13.0-0 f5 14.ef *A*:f5 15.*Q*:f5 gf 16.*A*e2 *Q*f6 17.*A*f4±) 13...*W*e7 14.0-0 a6 15.*Q*c3 *A*d7 16.a4±.

A.Alekhine recommended

➤ **11...♗d7?! 12.0-0 ♖c7 13.a4 ♖ae8 14.a5 ♖c8 ±** in his comments on the game Nimzovic – Marshall.

Osnos – Ehlvest, Tallin 1980: 12...a6 13.♗d2 ♖e8 14.a4 ♖c7 15.♖f3 c4 16.♗c2 ♖c5 17.♖e2 h5 18.h3 ♖h7 19.♗c3 ♗e5 20. h4 ♖g7 21.a5 ♖c8 22.♗a4 ±. 14...♖c8 is insufficient for equality, after 15.♖e1 ♖b8 16.a5 ♖a7 17.♖c4 ♗b5 18.♗g5 ±.

Brinck-Klausen – Holm, Copenhagen 1980 : 12.a4 ♖e7 13.a5 ♖c8 14.0-0 a6 15.♖e1 ♖e8 16.♖b3 ♖a7 17.♖c4 ♗d4 18.♗e3±.

➤ **3. 11...♖bd7?! 12.0-0 a6 13.a4 ♖b8** is hardly recommendable. The same position was reached (with some transposition) in the game Kozma – Zaruba, Czecho-slovakia 1955. Black played 13...♖e7 14.a5 ♖e8 15.♖c4 ♖e5 16.♖b6 ♖b8. White had to play now 17.♗e2 f5 (or 17...g5?! 18.♖:c8 ♖:c8 19.♗g4!) 18.f4 ♖d7 19.♖:c8 ♖:c8 20. ♗f3 ♗ ♖e1 and e4–e5±.

14.f4

14.♖c4 ♖c7 (14...♖e8!? 15.♗f4 ♖e7 16.a5 ♖e5 17.♖a4 ♗d7 18.♖ab6 ♗b5 19.♖b1 ±) 15.♗f4 ♖e5 16.♗:e5! de 17.a5 ♖e8 18.♖a4 ♗d7 19.♖cb6 ♗:a4 20. ♖:a4±, Borisenko – Sokolsky, Kiev 1954.

Abeg – Flores, corr. 1980–1981, 14...♖c7 15.♖c2 ♖e8 16.h3 ♖f8 17.a5 b5 18.ab ♖:b6 19.♖c4 ♖c7 20.e5±.

12.0-0 a6.

12...c4?! 13.♗c2 ♗d7 14.♗d2 looks rather suspicious for Black. 14.a4 is also good – 14...♖c8 15.f4 ♖a8 16.♖e2 ♖c7 17.f5 ♖c5 18.♖h1 a6 19.a5 ♖c7 20.♖f3±, Anishchenko – Tereshin, corr. 1981. **14...♖c7.** After 14...♖c8 15.♖h1 ♖c5 16.f3 ♖c8 17.a4 a6 18.♖e2 Black is clearly worse. 18...b5? loses after 19.♗b4 ♖c7 20.♗a5+-. The game Keene – Pritchett, England 1972 went on 18...♖e7 19.♗b4 ♖c8 20.♗c3! (20.♗:d6 ♖b6!∞) 20...♖h8 21.♖d2±.

15.a4 a5 16.♟f3 ♟c5 17.♞fd1 ♞e7 18.h3 ♞ae8 19.♟f1
♟c8 20.♞e3 ♟c7 21.♞d4±, Ehlvest – Wojtkiewicz, Sochi
1982

13.a4 ♟bd7

13...♟c7 is hardly recommendable since the plan with c5–
c4 is bad, and the Queen should control the “h4–d8” diagonal.

Ruderfer – Lerner, Alma-Ata 1971: 14.♟e2 ♟h5 15.f4 ♞d4
16.♟h1 ♟f6 17.♟f3 c4 18.♞c2 ♟e7 19.a5±. Black decided to
win a pawn here but White had a strong attack – 19...♞:e3
20.♞:e3 ♟b:d5 21.♟:d5 ♟:d5 22.♞d2 ♟c7 23.f5±.

Minogina – Levitina, Tbilisi 1979: 14.a5 ♟bd7 15.♟c2 ♟e5
16.♞e2 ♟fg4 17.♞:g4 ♟:g4 18.♟c4 ♟e5. White kept the
advantage after 19.♟b6 ♞b8 20.♟ca4 followed by ♞a3.

14.f4 !?

White played 14.a5 in the game Monoghina – Stermina,
Moscow 1980. There followed 14...♟e5 15.♞c2?! ♟fg4
16.♟:g4 ♞:g4 17.f3 ♞d7 18.♟e2 b5 19.ab ♟:b6 20.♞a4.
They reached an equal endgame after 20...♞b5! 21.♞:b5 ab
22.♞:a8 ♞:a8 23.♟:b5 ♟:b5 24.♟:b5 ♞b8! 25. ♟:d6 ♞f8
26.f4; 15.♞e2! 26.g5! 26.h3 ♟g6±.

In case White plays 14.♞c2 instead of the text move, Black
has 14...♞b8 15.a5 b5 16.ab ♟:b6 17.f4 ♟:e4! 18.♟:e4 ♞d4
19.♟h1 f5, or 14.h3 ♟h5!.

14...c4!

Black has good counterplay. For example: 15.♟:c4 ♟c5
16.e5 de 17.fe ♟:d5, or 15.♞c2 ♟c5 16.♟f3 ♟b3!.

The statistics prove a distinct problems for Black in this
variation, although White is avoiding 9.♟c4 in favour of the
main lines in most of the games.”

Most of my students lost their vigour to study this variation
further, having read this excerpt. It looks like 7...♟bd7
promises Black good game throughout.

According to the book, “Black is OK” in some other
variations as well i.e. 9...♟e7!?. The next chapter of the

Kapengut's book is treating the most natural move $7... \Delta g7$ and once again Black seems to be without any problems. I don't think that the Modern Benoni is such reliable an opening that Black can play almost anything to have counterplay everywhere. Yet, if that was still so, the young player must allways know what he should play in fact: $7... \Delta bd7$, or $7... \Delta g7$ – which of these two moves is better. He must have a clear impression, despite that sometimes it might be wrong, what his opening repertoire looks like. On the other hand, a lot of strong players, on the level of an IM and higher, who happen to play the Modern Benoni, consider Kapengut's book to be really good. It comprises a full and well selected information, and making analysis and logical deductions is something players like that can manage themselves.

It becomes clear now that what we need is a selection of games which demonstrates the strategical plans in the position, the methods of playing the opening and the middlegame. I have always been trying to put the emphasis on the quality of the examples, and not on the quantity and besides, I prefer to use to the limit the chess classics, thoroughly analysed with excellent comments by world's strongest players. I know a lot of young players that have wonderful card-indexes with plenty of games and are constantly working on their updating. They are not capable however to make an elementary analysis of a position, not to mention that usually they have a very meagre idea about the endgame or the classics. They still elaborate on their game collections and selections and all that time and enormous effort are proved to be in vain by their poor practical results.

Our aim is to obtain a position with a bright strategical perspective out of the opening, trying to avoid, whenever possible, the strictly mechanical work.

Lets continue our study of the openings of poor quality.

The Tchigorin Defence

I would like to treat this opening extremely simply.

After **1.d4 d5 2.c4 ♖c6?! 3.e3!?** deserves serious attention. Now if Black abstains from the centre counter-blow **3...e5**, the Knight's move **2...♖c6** looks rather stupid. On **3...e5 4.de** the ECO gives the following variation: **4...d4! 5.ed ♖:d4 6.♖:d4 ♜:d4 7.♗d3 ♗g4! 8.f3 ♗e6 9.♗e3 0-0-0** with an advantage for Black after the game Reti – Bogoljubov 1921. White can play **5.a3!** however and we reach the position that we have already analysed in the Albin Countergambit.

What we have to look anew is the move **4...dc!**? After **5.♖:d8+ ♖:d8** White can choose between **6.♜f3** and **6.f4**. The move **6.♜f3** looks more reliable, since after **6...♜b4 7.♞d2! ♗f5** doesn't work, because of **8.♜d4**. Black can play **6...♗g4 7.♗:c4 ♗:f3 8.gf ♜e5 9.♗e2** but White has a clear advantage in the endgame because of the two bishops.

6.f4 looks riskier but if White manages to keep the central pawns connected without too much delay in the development, his huge opening advantage will be guaranteed. Unfortunately, this position hasn't been tried in practice neither by me, nor by my students.

It is unfavourable for Black to play the straightforward

6...♜b4 7.♞d2 ♗f5 8.♜f3! ♜c2, because of **9.♜d4**, and to **6...♗e6** comes **7.♜a3!**.

As we can see, with the help of **3.e3!?** White can set the game on unexploited but favourable lines, intercepting the effect of surprise in the process. This is a very rational approach from the point of view of the practical player. The move **3.e3** is somewhere in deep shadow in the contemporary theory, therefore you don't have to fear that someone, somewhere might analyse it thoroughly. This move is in complete harmony with common sense in chess and meets all

the requirements of the position. You can at least be completely sure, in case you fail in your first attempt with this approach, that the opening position is not to blame for your mishaps. On the other hand, you can ignore the tournament practice in openings like that almost completely. Finally, if your opponent finds a way to equalize convincingly, you can give up 3.e3 and look for something else. Playing in the Championship of Bjelorrussia for women in 1990, Elena Zayac was expecting her opponent to play the Tchigorin Defence for sure. She didn't want however to play an endgame and asked one of the strongest grandmasters in the world Boris Gelfand for an advice. He recommended the following variation : 1.d4 d5 2.c4 ♖c6 3.♗c3 ♗f6 4.♗f3 ♠g4 5.cd ♗:d5 6.e4 ♗:c3 7.bc e5 8.d5 ♗b8 9.♞a4+ ♗d7 10. ♗:e5 ♞f6 11.♠e2! with a decisive advantage.

Black avoided this line and played **3...e5?** instead. The game continued 4.cd ♗:d4 5.e3 ♗f5 6.♗f3 ♠d6 7.♠b5+ ♠d7 8.♞a4 ♗fe7 9.e4. White obtained a clear advantage and brought it easily home.

Gelfand belongs firmly to the world chess elite. To preserve his place there, he must have an excellent opening preparation for all kinds of surprises – a repertoire with a world-class precision. We have a long road up to Gelfand though.

Lets turn our attention now to another opening.

The Budapest Gambit

After the moves **1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 e5 3.de ♗g4** I advise my pupils to play **4.e3 ♗:e5 5.♗h3!?**. What about the strange knight's move to "h3" ? I understand perfectly well that if White

wants to refute this provocative opening, he must study the moves 4.♖f3 or 4.♗f4. The classic is also worth turning to:

Alekhine – I.Rabinovitch, Baden-Baden 1925 – **4.e4!**. "This is the best move for White in this position with a good reason. White returns the gambit pawn occupying the all-important "d5" square instead. White has to play very precisely in the next few moves, otherwise Black might successfully attack the pawn center." A.Alekhine. **4...♖:e5 5.f4 ♖g6**. The other retreat with the knight 5...♖ec6 is considered best by the theory. I can offer the reader another miniature:

5...♖ec6 6.♗e3 ♗b4+7.♖c3 ♗e7 8.♗d3 f5 9.♗h5+! g6 10.♗f3 ♗:c3+ 11.bc fe? 12.♗:e4 0-0 13.♗d5+ ♗h8 14.♖h3 d6 15.0-0 ♗:h3 16.♗:h3 ♗d7 17.f5! gf 18.♗ab1! f4 19.♗:f4 ♗:h3 20. ♗e5+! 1-0, Alekhine – Seiss, Hastings 1925/1926.

6.♖f3! ♗c5 7.f5! ♖h4? 8.♖g5 ♗e7 9.♗g4 f6 10. ♗h5+! g6 11.♗:h4 fg 12.♗:g5 ♗f7 13.♗e2 0-0 14.♗f1 ♖c6 15.♖c3 ♖d4 16.fg ♗:g6 17.♗:f8+ ♗:f8 18.♗h5 ♗b6 19.0-0 ♗g7 20. ♗df1 ♖e6 21.♗f7+ ♗h8 22.♗:e6 ♗:e6 23.♗f6! Black resigned.

No doubt, Alekhine was a much better player than his opponents and his central strategy deserved studying. I still try to follow my rule – to stay away from the main theoretical lines in the openings of poor quality in favour of some less analysed, strategically sound line. I can't help here making an analogy with the chess-life in the former Soviet Union. I have been working as a coach there for years and I have had a lot of disputes which had turned sometimes into serious conflicts. I know personally plenty of players and coaches that long to argue and even fight over trifles. I have had a formidable experience with a rather rude and unjust attitude towards me and my students, but still I preferred to go on working in a way that I saw fit, and as for the malevolence, I managed to save my time and avoid senseless fights, by just ignoring it.

You can for sure spend some time looking over the chess magazines of the last several years, analyse for a while and aim at systems that are going to guarantee a huge opening advantage in the Albin Countergambit or the Budapest Gambit. Yet, do we need all that at this stage when openings like that are played just once in fifty games, while we have a reliable system on the side that wouldn't consume any more time and efforts. We have to teach the young player to win due to his work on the game as a whole, and not only to some ultrasophisticated opening preparation. Wouldn't it be much more practical if we spend all this time on studying the really important opening problems facing White in the Nimzovich Defence, the King's Indian or the Gruenfeld Defence and as for the Tchigorin Defence or the opening 1.d4 d5 2.c4 ♗f5 just to avoid opening disputes temporarily. Let's go back now to 5.♖h3. That move was first shown to me by one of the strongest correspondence players in the world Donatas Lapienis. We meet each other often to analyse different opening problems as coaches on various junior competitions.

The last White's move seems very logical. One of the White's knights will stay on c3, the other one on f4, and the "d5" square will be almost under total control. If Black develops the knight from b8 to c6 one of the White's knights will exercise a powerful pressure from the "d5" outpost. Therefore it seems that Black has to try to control the "d5" square with a pawn, so White will have excellent practical chances playing against the weak "d6" pawn instead. I understand that if Black defends well, he must obtain sufficient counterchances, still this approach in the opening brings White excellent practical results.

I am going to illustrate all this with three games of one of my students – Alexander Zazhoghine that were played in junior competitions. All these games are similar to each other, yet very instructive. Black was developing his pieces a bit

carelessly, without some well thought-over game plan and invariably had difficult positions. The White player on the other hand, was completing his development following the prepared game plan, seized the initiative and then finished the opponent off by means of enterprising and effective onslaughts.

Zazhoghine – Philimonov Grodno 1989

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e5 3.de ♗g4 4.e3 ♜:e5 5.♗h3 d6 6.♗f4 ♖bc6?! 7.♗e2 ♗e7?! The fianchettoing of this bishop looked preferable. 8.0-0 0-0 9.♗c3 ♗f5 10. ♗fd5 a5?



Diagram 8

Black made several natural but trite moves and as a result got a very bad position. Zazhoghine is starting the offensive. 11.e4! ♗d7 12.f4 ♗g6 13.f5 ♗e5 14.f6! ♗:f6 15.♗:f6+ gf 16.♗h6 ♖e8 17.♗d5 ♖e6 18.h4 – Black threatened 18...f5, now it will be met by 19.♗g5. 18...♗e7

19.♗d2! White is playing for mate, setting aside trifles like the "f6" pawn. 19...♗:d5 20. cd ♖e8 21.♖f2! f5 22.ef ♖:h4 23.g3! ♖d8 24.f6 c6



25.♗f8! Black resigns.

Zazhoghine – Yanukovic

Vitebsk 1990

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e5 3.de ♗g4 4.e3 ♜:e5 5.♗h3 ♗bc6?!
6.♗f4 ♗b4+ The exchange of the dark square bishops is in White's favour. The move 6...g6 looked sensible.

7.♗d2 ♗:d2+ 8.♞:d2 d6 9.♗c3 0-0 10.♗e2 ♞e8 11.0-0
♗g6 12.♗fd5 ♗f5?! 13.f4!



Diagram 10

Black hasn't made any blunders yet, but he played without a plan. Consequently White has a much better position.

13...♞d7 14.♞ae1 ♗ce7 15.e4!

This is a rather energetic move.

15...♗:d5 16.cd ♗g4? Black makes a fatal mistake, but even after 16...♗:e4 17.♗b5 c6 18.dc bc 19.♗:e4 cb 20.f5 despite the

material equality White has a total domination. Now Black's bishop is trapped and the game is over. 17.♗b5 c6 18.♗a4 ♗h5 19.f5 ♗e5 20. ♞g5 g6 21.h3 ♞c7 22.g4 ♗:g4 23.hg h6 24.♞:h6 ♗:g4 25.♞h3 ♞b6+ 26.♞g2 ♞g7 27.fg fg 28.♞:g4 1:0

Zazhoghine – Miezis

Vilnius 1990

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e5 3.de ♗g4 4.e3 ♜:e5 5.♗h3 ♗g6 6.g3 ♗c6?! 7.f4! Black prevented the appearance of the White's knight on f4, but the knight on g6 is rather misplaced. White is playing to restrict this knight, increasing his space advantage all along. 7...♗b4+?! (7...♗c5 was much more logical, attacking the weak "e3" pawn.) 8.♗d2 ♞e7? The Queen on

9. ♖e2 ♗c2+ 10. ♖d2 0-0 11. ♗c3



Diagram 11

Once again White's advantage is out of question. 11... ♖e8 12. ♗d5 ♖d6? The retreat to d8 is better than this rather awkward move. 13. ♗g2 ♗d8 14. c5! After this nice tactical stroke the game is virtually over. 14... ♖c6 15. ♗e7+ ♗:e7 16. ♗:c6 dc 17. ♗f2 ♗e6 18. 0-0 ♗:c5 19. e4 ♗g6

20. ♖c2 ♗e6 21. ♗ad1 ♗ef8 22. ♗d2 ♗e7 23. ♗fd1 b6 24. ♗d8 ♗b7 25. ♗:e8 ♗:e8 26. b4 ♗e6 27. f5 ♗g5 28. ♖b3 c5 29. bc ♗:f5 30. ♖a4 ♗f8 31. c6 ♗f3+ 32. ♗g2 ♗:c6 33. ♖:c6 ♗3d4 34. ♗:d4 ♗:d4 35. ♖:c7 ♗b5 36. ♖c6 Black resigned.

Naturally, Black's play in all these games was far from perfect but the world-class players play openings like that very seldom if at all, so to start with a system like that with White is entirely satisfactory.

By the way, if we compare the games of Alekhine and Zazhoghine (God forgive for the sacrilege...) without knowing who plays White, it will not be easy to tell which one was played by the great champion, and which by the unfamiliar master's candidate, since the level of opposition by Black was about equal.

I am at a loss how to name the next opening of this sort i. e. 1. d4 d5 2. c4 ♗f5?!. Some years ago, it was favoured by V. Malanjuk, one of the strongest IM's in the USSR at this time. I had to seriously prepare for our game in the Championship of the Armed Forces in Odessa 1981, having in fact no reference books around. After 1. d4 d5 2. c4 ♗f5?! I made my choice upon 3. cd. Black must play 3... ♗:b1. and now comes

4...♖d7, or 4...♗d7, because of the two bishops and the centre, so what is left is the move **4...c6!** **5.♖b1!** (5.d2? is bad because of 5...♗c6 6.♖b1 e5!) **5...♗d5**. Black threatens now ♖b8–d7–b6 and White will have problems to defend the “a2” pawn. After the commonplace 6.♗f3?! ♗d7 7.e3 ♖b6 8.♗b3 ♗:b3 9.ab Black is not worse at all. Therefore White played instead **6.e3 ♗d7 7.♗d2! ♖b6 8.♗a5**. and after **8...♗f6 9.♗:d5 cd** won the endgame. The whole game can be found, with elaborate comments, in the second volume of my book “Endgame Contours”. Some time later, in the Team Championship of the Armed Forces in Sevastopol 1982, S. Lputian beat Malanjuk in the same way. Malanjuk soon became a grandmaster and joined the Soviet chess elite, and as for the bizarre bishop move 2...♗f5 – he simply gave it up.

I would like to remind the reader that I never opened the “Encyclopedia” even once to try for an advantage after the recommendations of the author. I got used, ever since I was a child, not to trust the reference books blindly, but to use them just as a landmark for analytical work on the openings, checking almost every move in the main lines.

For example, in the position in the Tchigorin Defence that we looked over some pages before, the “Encyclopedia” refers to the game Gligoric – Mariotti in the “Chess Informant” 21, which continued 11.♗g4 ♗:c3 12.♗d1 ♗:a1 13.♗c2?! (13.♗b5 is better) 13...0-0-0 14.♗b2 ♗e1 15.♗c3 ♗c5 16.♗e1 ♗a4 17.♗:e5 ♗e8 18.♗:f7 ♗g8 19.f3 a6 and Black had the advantage, although as you might have noticed by now that after 11.♗e2! Black would be in a hopeless position. The “Encyclopedia of the Chess Openings” consists mainly of a selection of games, classified in different variations, suitable to work on mainly as a reference. Plenty of interesting analysis and a lot of new ideas can be found in some opening

"Phisculture and Sports" publishing house. Every chess-player must have his own theory of chess openings which should include some new and some old, but updated schemes, variations, thoughts and moves. We are trying to develop such a kind of opening repertoire that will help him to think in terms of strategy, lead him to constant improvement in the skill of positional play and enable him to pose problems to his opponents complex enough to solve. Yet if possible, our opening choice should be a bit away from the latest opening fashion to avoid getting drowned in the flow of new information. Accordingly, if you decide to enlarge your opening repertoire with some new variation, ask yourself the following questions :

Do I have to do that just now because this line seems to be played lately by almost everybody?

Wouldn't it be better if I turn my efforts on some less popular variation, which is positionally sound although less familiar?

We are going now to turn our attention on the openings of good quality. White can hardly rely on a serious opening advantage in these openings and because of that my work with the young players is restricted in the first stage to the explanation of the main strategical ideas and the choice of lines that lead to complex positions abundant with active possibilities.

The Queen's Gambit

We are going to start with the Queen's Gambit Declined:

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3. There is a fine point right now – Black has a choice between 3...♗f6 and 3...♗e7. I have had a

you just start to work together with, doesn't make any difference between the two moves and has a very vague idea about the minority attack, if at all. Therefore it is more important to turn his attention on the key moments of the struggle and mainly to the importance of the diagonal "b1–h7" in the Karlsbad System. White has the opportunity to seize this diagonal after **3...d6**. What can happen next is: **4.cd ed 5.g5** and now Black can not play **5...f5** because of **6.f6**. Black must choose between **5...e7**, or **5...c6**.

After **5...e7 6.e3** it becomes clear that **6...f5** once again doesn't work due to **7.f6 f6 8.Bb3** and Black loses a pawn. So Black has to play **6...c6** and by playing **7.Bc2!** White grabs the all important diagonal. Notice that **7.Bc2!** is more precise than **7.d3 e4!**, since after **7.Bc2 e4?** is a blunder because of **8.f7 B:e7 9.d:d5**.

Lets assume now that Black has played **5...c6** and White has played **6.e3**. Here **6...f5** is possible, but after **7.Bf3!** White is unavoidably going to compromise Black's pawn structure on the King side, since Black can't play **7...g6**, because of **8.g4!**.

I'll try to explain what is the point of the fight for the diagonal "b1–h7". The minority pawn-attack is one of the possible plans for White. He has three pawns against four on the Queen side. Suppose the "b" pawn reaches the b5 square:



Diagram 12

The appearance of a pawn weakness is unavoidable in the Black's pawn structure – either on c6, or on d5.

Suppose now that after the moves **5...e7 6.e3 c6** White plays **7.f3?!**, instead of **7.Bc2!**. Black must immediately take his chance and play

7...♙f5! White has to secure the "b1" square for the rook in order to proceed with the minority attack, so he must exchange the light square bishops. The line continues with :

7...♙f5 8.♙d3 ♘:d3 9.♚:d3 ♞bd7 10. 0-0 0-0 11.♞ab1 a5 12.a3 ♞e8 13.b4



Diagram 13

Black can play now 13...♞e4 with about equal position, but with the bishops exchanged, a very reliable way of resistance is to meet the minority attack "head-on" with 13...b5!? and to follow this with a knight manoeuvre up to c4. You have to remember that when the light square bishops are present on

the board, the plan with b7–b5 for Black has serious drawbacks from the point of view of positional play. It would be useful for the reader to know that sometimes Black is trying to fight back for the important diagonal with the help of the long manoeuvre ♞d7–f8–e6; g7–g6; ♞e6–g7 and ♙f5, although usually White "takes care" of the "c6" pawn meanwhile, like in the game

Novikov – Haritonov

Sevastopol 1986

The opening in this game went on: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♞c3 ♞f6 4.cd ed 5.♙g5 ♙e7 6.e3 c6 7.♙d3 ♞bd7 8.♚c2 ♞f8 9.♞f3 ♞e6 10.♙h4 g6 11.0-0 0-0 12.♞ab1 ♞g7 13.b4 a6 14.a4 ♙f5 15.b5 ab 16.ab ♞c8 17.♞fc1 ♙:d3 18.♚:d3 ♞f5 19.♙:f6 ♙:f6 20. ♞a4 ♞e8 21.bc bc.



Diagram 14

The international master A. Haritonov was commenting the game in the "Chess Informant" 42 and mentioned that instead of 20...♖e8?! it would have been better to play 20...♗d6 with the idea of 21...♖c7 and then if necessary ♖fc8, although White's chances would be preferable. Generally speaking,

positions like that are practically without any perspectives for Black from the point of view of playing for a win. White can "work on" the weak pawn "c6" at leisure without any risk of losing. I have never been dealing with statistics, but I think that about 35 to 40 percent of games like that end with wins for White, and the rest in a draw. Black is wasting a lot of time for the sake of the light square bishops' exchange. **22.♖b6 ♗e7 23.♖cb1 ♗d6 24.♗b3 ♖a8 25.♖b7 ♗f5 26.♗c5 ♖e7.** White managed to occupy the "b" file and the "c5" outpost. Black has to reconcile with the simplification of the position, due to the threat 27.♖d7. **27.♖b8+! ♖:b8 28.♗:b8+ ♗:b8 29.♖:b8+ ♗g7 30.g4! ♗h4 31.♗:h4 ♖:h4 32.♖c8**



Diagram 15

32..♖a7 White's strategy was crowned with success. The "c6" pawn is lost. Black's only counterchance is to attack the "f2" pawn. **33.♖:c6 ♖a2 34.♗d3 ♖d2 35.♖c3 f5!? 36.gf gf 37.♗f1 f4!?** Black is putting up heroic efforts to create counterplay. White was threatening to displace the

black rook from the "d2" square and occupy it with a white rook, after which to win the game with an extra pawn would be just a matter of time. 38. ♖f4? I. Novikov was tempted to win another pawn keeping the compact pawn structure, but now he allowed Black to drastically activate his pieces. The right decision was 38. e4! and after 38... ♗f6 39. ♗g2 ♖f5 40. ♗f3 White was bound to win. It was highly probable though that the time-trouble would affect both the quality of play and the result. 38... ♗:f2+ 39. ♗g1 ♗d2 40. ♖:d5 ♗g6! Black is two pawns down but he has nothing anymore to fear. 41. ♗c8 ♗f5 42. ♗f8+ ♗g4 43. ♗f4+ ♗h3 44. ♗f3+ ♗g4 45. ♗f1 ♗e2! 46. ♖f4 ♗:e3 47. ♗g2 ♗e4 48. ♖:h4 ♗:h4 49. ♗d1 ♗g5 50. ♗f2 ♗f6 51. ♗d3 ♗e6 52. ♗e3 ♗d5 Draw.

Lets turn our attention now to the move 3... ♗e7. I learned the fine points of this move long ago, after the match for the World Championship in 1963 between M. Botvinnik and T. Petrosian. The idea of this humble looking move is that Black intends to occupy the diagonal "b1-h7" with the bishop, if White aims at setting the game along the lines of the Karsbad variation. For example: 3... ♗e7 4. ♖f3 ♖f6 5. cd ed 6. ♗g5 c6 7. ♗c2 g6!?. There were indeed some attempts from White to get an advantage by means of 8. e4 de 9. ♗:f6 ♗:f6 10. ♗:e4+. V. Eingorn played like this with White against A. Karpov in the Championship of USSR 1988. After 10... ♗e6 11. ♗c4 ♗e7 12. ♗:e6 ♗:e6 13. ♗:e6+ fe 14. 0-0-0 ♖a6 15. ♗he1 ♖c7 16. ♖e4 ♗e7 17. ♗d3 White had a small endgame advantage, but the game ended in a draw. **A. Karpov** tried playing the same line with White afterwards against **A. Yusupov**. Black chose the double-edged line: 8... ♖:e4 9. ♗:e7 ♗:e7 (9... ♗:e7 10. ♖:d5!) 10. ♖:e4 de 11. ♗:e4+ ♗e6 Karpov found out now the drawbacks of Blacks' setup playing 12. ♗c4 ♗a5+ 13. ♗f1! and after 13... ♗f5 14. ♗e3 ♖d7 15. ♗e1 ♗ae8 and now the not too obvious pawn sacrifice 16. d5! cd 17. ♗b5! set forth a King-side attack that brought him a brilliant victory. You can

look over this game annotated by IM A. Kuzmin in "Shakhmati in USSR " 9/1988, or with comments by GM A. Zaitzev in the "Chess Informant"

Little by little however, Black found the way to neutralize White's initiative. The game **Ruban – Dreev**, Tbilisi 1989, went on: 10.♖e4+ ♗e7 11.♗c4 0-0 12.0-0 ♗b4! 13.♗b3 ♗f5 14.♗f4 ♘d7 15.♞fe1 a5 16.g4 ♗e6 17.♗:e6. Black had solved all problems in the opening and was not afraid of the 17.♞:e6 stroke. After 17...fe 18.♗:e6+ ♘h8 19.♗:d7 ♗:b2 20.♗c1 ♗b4 Black has a strong counterplay.

17...fe 18.♗e3 ♞ae8 19.♘e4 ♗g7 20.♞ad1 ♘b6! Black seized the initiative and subsequently won the game.

The theoretical interest towards the variation beginning with the move 7.♗c2 began to diminish. White managed to win after a sharp fight in the game Karpov – Yusupov from the tournament in Rotterdam 1989 after: 1.c4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♗e7 4.♘f3 ♘f6 5.cd ed 6.♗g5 c6 7.♗c2 ♘a6!? 8.e3 (8.a3 would be followed by 8...g6) 8...♘b4 9.♗d1 ♗f5 10. ♞c1 a5 11.♗e2 0-0 12. 0-0 ♘d7 13.♗:e7 ♗:e7 14.♗b3 ♞fb8 15.♘a4 ♘a6 16.♗:a6 ♞:a6 17.♘c5 ♞b6 18.♗c3 ♞b5 19.♞fe1 h6 20. b3 ♗e4 21.♘d2 ♗g6 22.♘f1 ♘:c5 23.dc b6 24.cb ♞8:b6 25.♘d2 ♗a3 26.♘f3 c5 27.♗d2 ♗e4 28.♘e5 ♞e6 (28...c4!?) 29.♘d3 g5?!. You can find this game commented by Karpov in the "Chess Informant" 47. Later however, Karpov did not use this variation even a single time in his match against Yusupov in 1989, although he could play it practically in every game, because Yusupov played with Black the Lasker defence in the Queen's gambit. Evidently the ex-world champion was convinced that Black had more than satisfactory defensive resources. It was hard to imagine any other state of affairs. Because if Black does not have enough counterplay in this variation, the Queen's gambit – one of the most reliable and checked over openings, would be under the threat of refutation.

I think it would be useful to mention that after 3...♠e7, 4.e4 – the centre stroke does not promise White anything. If we compare this position with that one arising in the Slav Gambit – 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♣c3 c6 4.e4 de 5.♣:e4 ♠b4+ White can sacrifice a pawn by means of 6.♠d2 ♖:d4 7.♠:b4 ♖:e4+ 8.♠e2 – The difference is that Black's position is not weakened by the move c7 – c6. Therefore now in case of 4...de 5.♣:e4 ♠b4+ White has to play 6.♣c3. After that Black by playing 6...c5 obtains easily a satisfactory game.

Lets go back to the move 3...♣f6. After 4.cd ed 5.♠g5 ♠e7 6.e3 c6 7.♖c2 the diagonal "b1 – h7" is in White's hands. He can choose between the "pawn minority" attack and some other game plans. The pawn minority attack is a very reliable plan but somehow Black finds the way through. Students that would like to get acquainted with the plans of both sides in this case might find it useful to study the part: "Typical positions with Karlsbad pawn structure" in the small but instructive book of B. Zlotnik "Typical Middle-game Positions", which was published in 1986 by the publishing house "FIC". Yet, I remember the ironic comment of master O. Dementiev, who was the coach of grandmaster A. Petrosian: "If you, in your best young years, attack the "c6" pawn, what are you going to do when you get older?" I happen to share that opinion that in the "Karlsbad variation" of the Queen's gambit, the young player should better choose a game plan with much broader strategical possibilities than the Queen side attack. I was very much impressed by the game

Botvinnik – Keres

Moscow 1952

1.d4 ♣f6 2.c4 e6 3.♣c3 d5 4.cd ed 5.♠g5 ♠e7 6.e3 0-0
7.♠d3 ♣bd7 8.♖c2 ♖e8 9.♣ge2 ♣f8 10. 0-0 c6 11.♖b1.
White developed the King's knight to e2 and demonstrated his intention to start the pawn minority attack. That is usually done when the King's knight is on f3. 11...♠d6? P. Keres

uses one of the best methods against the pawn minority attack of his opponent, yet he doesn't pay attention to the difference of the position of the White knight. Indeed, when the knight is on f3, Black's plan including the moves $\Delta e7 - d6$, $\textcircled{d}f8 - g6$, $h7 - h6$, the exchange on f6 - $\Delta g5:f6$ $\textcircled{d}d8:f6$, $\Delta c8 - g4$ and $\textcircled{d}g6 - h4$ often leads to a crushing victorious attack on the King side. Here however, White's knight is on e2 and that allows M. Botvinnik to refrain from the "pawn minority attack" and start an active play in the centre. The position of the black bishop on d6 just helps the development of the White's initiative and turns out to be a decisive loss of time. **12. $\textcircled{d}h1$** . The threat was $12... \Delta h2+$ and $13... \textcircled{d}g4+$. **12... $\textcircled{d}g6$** **13.f3!** "Playing $11. \textcircled{d}b1$ White was preparing the standard queen side attack, now of course he gives up this plan in favour of the centre advance. Black can not prevent the move $e3-e4$ anymore, because the counterstroke $c6-c5$ is almost impossible in this position" - (Botvinnik).

13... $\Delta e7$ **14. $\textcircled{d}be1$** $\textcircled{d}d7$. $14... h6$ could be met by $15. \Delta:h6$ gh $16. \Delta:g6$. **15. $\Delta:e7$** $\textcircled{d}e7$ **16. $\textcircled{d}g3$** $\textcircled{d}f6$ **17. $\textcircled{d}f2$** $\Delta e6$ **18. $\textcircled{d}f5!$** $\Delta:f5$ **19. $\Delta:f5$** $\textcircled{d}b6$ **20. e4**. The game has been decided already in a strategical aspect. Black has nothing to offer against the overwhelming attack of his opponent. **20... de** **21.f6** $\textcircled{d}ad8$ **22.e5** $\textcircled{d}d5$ **23. $\textcircled{d}e4$** . The white knight penetrates the enemy lines, since $23... \textcircled{d}c7$ $24. \textcircled{d}d6$ $\textcircled{d}e8$ is impossible because of $25. \textcircled{d}c8$ or $25. \textcircled{d}:f7$.



Diagram 16

23... $\textcircled{d}f8$ **24. $\textcircled{d}d6$** $\textcircled{d}c7$ **25. $\Delta e4$** $\textcircled{d}e6?$!. Black's best practical chance was the exchange sacrifice on d6. **26. $\textcircled{d}h4$** $g6$ **27. $\Delta:d5$** cd **28. $\textcircled{d}c1$** $\textcircled{d}d7$ **29. $\textcircled{d}c3$** $\textcircled{d}f8$. Keres is prepared to meet the attack along the "h" file connected with $30. \textcircled{d}h3$, with $30...f5$ but out of the blue comes

the tactical blow: **31. ♖f5! ♜e8 32. ♖h6+**. Botvinnik is not tempted to win the exchange and finishes off the game with an energetic king side attack. **32... ♗f8 33. ♗f6 ♖g7 34. ♜f3 ♜c8 35. ♖:f7 ♜e6 36. ♗g5 ♖f5 37. ♖h6 ♗g7 38. g4** Black resigned.

Nowadays M. Botvinnik's plan is not any clairvoyance in strategy and forms a part of the typical methods of playing such kind of positions. Therefore White is not disguising his aggressive intentions in the centre with **11. ♖b1** but plays **11. f3** immediately.



Diagram 17

The position is full of tension but the strategical initiative is firmly in White's hands. By the way, White never gave a "solemn oath" to necessarily play **e3–e4**, but can eventually play **g2–g4** and **♖g3** next, and sometimes when the black bishop is on **e6** and the knight is on **g6**, he might push forward

the "f" pawn, despite that the central breakthrough is his main objective.

The theory has dealt with the position on the last diagram extensively, but in this book I'd like to acquaint the reader with the methods of my work, and not to write once again an opening monograph. Therefore if possible, I would try to follow my own games and the games of my students and also some games of eminent players that belong to classics.

Black can not prevent the "e" pawn thrust otherwise, except by **11...c5?**, but to this **12. ♖ad1!** is very strong, threatening **13. ♗:f6** or **13. dc ♗:c5** **14. ♖:d5**. Therefore, meanwhile he has to aim at the counterplay against the not too stable white

centre. White has to prepare his active actions in the centre paying attention to the disposition of the rooks.

Grandmaster G. Timoshchenko in his game against me in the Team championship of the Armed Forces of the USSR in Minsk 1984, tried to immediately clarify the position in the centre with the move **11...♖h5**. After **12.♗:e7 ♘:e7 13.e4 de 14.fe** Black played **14...♗g4**, and almost completely finished with the mobilization of forces and is ready to attack the white centre by means of ♖a8–d8 and ♖f8–e6. White has to play energetically. **15.♖f2!**? The best position of the White's rooks will be the duplication on the "f" file. **15...♖e6 16.♖af1 ♖f8** Black avoided the weakening of the position but lost a lot of tempi to defend the "f7" pawn. Now white grabs the initiative. **17.d5!**? To choose what pawn to go forward with is entirely a matter of taste. I picked up my choice on the Queen's pawn, but the move 17.e5 had its merits. **17...♖c5 18.♖d4 ♘e5 19.♖b3 ♖:d3 20.♘:d3 ♖f6**. The knight on h5 has no perspectives, besides Black has to reckon with the ♖f5 threat in all the lines. **21.h3 ♗c8** If 21...♗d7, 22.♖c5 is dangerous. **22.♖d2! ♗d7 23.♖c4 ♘e7**

The first impression is that White has a substantial positional advantage but Black's position is a tough nut to crack. How should White play?



Diagram 18

I wanted to decide the game by means of strategy, but I lost a lot of time on thinking over the move **24.♘d4!**?. Now if Black allows the exchange sacrifice, after **25.♖:f6 gf 26.d6** and next **♖:f6** and **e5**, Black will have a hopeless position. Therefore **24...c5** is the only move. The game might continue **25.♘e5**

♖:e5 26.♗:e5 ♖ae8 27.♗d3! c4 28.♗c5 ♗c8 29.d6 b6 30.
 ♖:f6 gf 31.d7 bc 32.de♖ ♖:e8 33.♖:f6. I managed to calculate
 this far from easy variation, but I was not sure if I would win
 the endgame after 33...♗e6. I failed to find an improvement
 for White, therefore I gave up the move 24.♖d4 in favour of
24.d6!? In fact I almost didn't calculate it at all, as I had this
 move just as an alternative to 24.♖d4 in the position of the
 last diagram. After **24...♖e6 25.e5 ♗d5**, since I had spent a
 lot of time up to now, I was afraid of an eventual time-trouble.
 The game continued 26.♖d4 ♗:c3 27.bc c5 28.♖e4 ♗c6
 29.♖g4 ♖:g4 30. hg ♗b5 31.♖f4 ♖fe8 and now a draw was
 agreed.

White had however, a very interesting move **26.♗e4**.
 During the game with the clock ticking along, I gave it up
 because of 26...b5 27.♗g5 ♖h6 28.♗:f7 ♖h5 29.♗e3 ♗e6
 and White loses a piece. Afterwards, when I was showing the
 game to my pupils, someone of them found out the excellent
 opportunity **30.♗:d5 cd** (30...♗:d5 31.d7) **31.d7** and it
 becomes clear that 31...♗:f7 loses after 32.e6, and as for
31...♖:f7 32.♖:f7 ♗:f7 33.♖c3! (33.♖e3! also deserves
 attention but after 33...♖h6 34.♖:a7 ♖d8 35.♖c7 ♖g5
 36.♖d6 ♖h6 the game should end in a draw, since 37.♖e7
 doesn't work because of 37...♖b6+ 38.♗h1 ♗e6)



Diagram 19

and the threat 34.♖c8+
 compels Black to play
33...♖g5!, since 33...♖f8 is bad
 because of 34.e6. 33...♗e6 is
 refuted by 34.♖c6, as well as
 33...♖d8 after 34.♖c7 ♖g5
 35.♖f6!. It looks like White's
 attack has run out of steam
 because to 34.♖c6 comes
 34...♖d8 and 35.e6 doesn't

work because of 35...♖e3+ and after 34.♖c8+ ♖d8 35.♖c6 – 35...♖b6+ is decisive. White can simply play **34.♔e1!** What has Black to do now? 34...♔d8 35.e6 ♕:e6 36.♔:e6 ♔:d7 is bad because of 37.♖c8+ ♔d8 38.♔e8+ ♖f7 39.♖e6#. 34...♖e7 also doesn't work because of 35.♖c8+! ♖d8 36.♖c6 and after 36...♖b6+ 37.♖:b6 ab 38.e6 ♕:e6 39.♔:e6 the rook endgame is hopeless for Black. It is possible that the best way out for Black will be **34...♖f5!? 35.♖c6 ♔f8 36.e6 ♕:e6 37.♖:e6+ ♖:e6 38.♔:e6 ♖f7**, but after **39.♔a6!** (39.♔d6?! ♖e7 40. ♔:d5 a6 41.b4 ♔d8 42.♖f2 ♔:d7 43.♔:d7+ ♖:d7 44.♖e3 ♖d6 45.♖d4 g6 46.g3 h5 47.h4 ♖e6 48.♖c5 ♖f5 49.♖b6 ♖g4 50. ♖:a6 ♖:g3 51.♖:b5 ♖:h4 52.a4 ♖h3 it will be a draw.), White will have substantial chances for a win. Naturally, to anticipate all this in the time-trouble was hardly possible, but the analysis afterwards proved that the advantage of White in the position after 23 moves was not just an optical illusion.

In the game Ryskin – Deiko, Minsk 1984 Black also continued with **11...♖h5 12.♕:e7 ♖:e7 13.e4**, but here Deiko decided not to open the “f” file and played **13...♕e6** instead. A. Ryskin played the straightforward **14.e5!? g6 15.f4 ♖g7 16.♖g3** which compelled Black to block the king side with **16...f5**. White now, having a definite space advantage and a much better piece position, begins to press the opponent on the other side of the board.



Diagram 20

17.♖a4 ♔ac8 18.a3 b6 19.b4
 ♕d7 20. ♖c3 ♖fe6 21.♖ge2

Black is constricted. The knights can not occupy the “e6” square simultaneously, the bishop on d7 is also not to envy. White has a clear plan of action mainly with the idea to attack the pawn chain of his opponent

with b4–b5 Black's position is strategically lost. **21...♖ed8 22.b5 ♕e8 23.♖b3 ♖b7 24.bc ♕:c6 25.♖ac1 a6 26.♗a2 b5 27.♗b4 ♖a8 28.♗:c6!** A. Ryskin without any doubt exchanges the "bad" bishop of his opponent, which has important defensive value. **28...♖:c6 29.♖:c6 ♖:c6 30. ♖b4 ♖c8 31.♖c1 ♖d7 32.♖:c8+ ♖:c8 33.♗f2** White is in the last stage of preparation for the pawn break a3–a4 on the Queen side. **33...♖d8 34.g3 ♗f7 35.a4 ♖b6 36.ab ♗c7 37.♗c3 ♗ge6 38.♗a4 ♖:d4+ 39.♖:d4 ♗:d4 40. b6 ♗ce6 41.♕:a6 ♗d8 42.♗c3 g5 43.♕c8 gf 44.gf ♗4e6 45.♗:d5** Black resigned.

Lets have a look now how M. Botvinnik's scheme was tested in some junior competitions. I will turn the reader's attention on the games of two master-candidates in the junior championship of Minsk 1988 i.e. the 14-years old Alexander Zazhoghine and the 15-years old Oleg Romanov who happened just to start by then working with me.

Zazhoghine – Zjulev

Minsk, 1988

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♗f6 4.cd ed 5.♕g5 c6 6.♖c2 ♕e7 7.e3 0-0 8.♕d3 ♗bd7 9.♗ge2 ♖e8 10. 0-0 ♗f8 11.f3 g6 12.♖ad1 ♗e6 13.♕h4 ♖c7?! A dubious move with the idea of a cheapo. Black intends to answer 14.e4? with 14...de 15.fe ♗g4 16.♕g3 ♖d8 threatening the "d4" pawn and the "e3" square. **14.♖c1!?** a very original decision. White controls the "e3" square with the Queen and enables access to the "b1" square for the light square Bishop. Still 14.♗h1 looked much more natural. **14... ♗h5 15.♕:e7 ♖:e7 16.e4 ♖d8.**



Diagram 21

A very original position. What kind of plan should White strive for? The most natural course of action seems to be the advance of the "e" and "f" pawns, but Black is ready to meet 17.e5 with the centre counterstroke c6-c5. Zazhoghine begins the preparation of the centre pawn advance.

17. ♖b1 There was some merit in another method of action. 17. ♖e3 was worth playing with the idea after 17...b6, to drastically change the character of the game by means of 18.ed cd 19. ♖fe1, or even 19.g4 ♜f6 20. ♖fe1 analogous to game 14 of the match Botvinnik – Petrosian which we are going to deal with, later. **17...b6 18. ♖e3 ♜b7 19.a3 ♖e8 20. e5 ♖ad8 21.f4.** White is very consistent in his actions, but in comparison with the previous game Black's pieces are developed much more harmoniously and Black doesn't need to mechanically block the White pawns with f7-f5.

21...c5! 22. ♜a2 ♜hg7. Black threatens now to exchange twice on d4, following with the manoeuvre ♜g7-f5 and the march of the "d" pawn. **23.g4!?** A very risky move, but a bold and straightforward decision. **23...h5.** 23...cd opening the centre looked much more logical. There could follow 24. ♜:d4 ♜:d4 25. ♖:d4 (25. ♖:d4? ♖h4) 25...♜e6 26. ♖:d5! (26. ♜:d5? ♖c5 27. ♜f6+ ♜h8) 26...♖h4 27.h3 and White's position is preferable. **24.dc d4?** Black succumbs to the tension and starts a counterattack that is not well prepared and boomerangs back. It was necessary to play 24...hg with an unclear position. **25. ♜:d4 ♖h4?! 26. ♜:e6 ♜:e6 27. ♜:e6 fe 28.cb ♖:g4+ 29. ♖g3 ♖f5 30. ba ♖c2 31.f5! ef 32. ♖:g6+ ♜h8 33. ♖:h5+ ♜g7 34. ♖g5+ ♜h8 35. ♖:d8+** Black resigned.

Romanov – Zjulev
Minsk, 1988

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♖c3 ♜f6 4.cd ed 5.♗g5 c6 6.e3 ♗e7
 7.♝c2 0-0 8.♗d3 ♜bd7 9.♞ge2 ♞e8 10. 0-0 ♜f8 11.f3 g6
 12.♞ad1 ♜e6 13.♗h4 ♜h5 14.♗f2 White avoids the dark
 square bishops exchange. 14...♝c7. **Black** takes the queen
 away from the opposition against the enemy rook. To 14...f5
 15.e4!? might follow and then 15...fe 16.fe de 17.♗:e4 and
 18.d5 next.

15.♞h1 ♗d6 The "h2" pawn is hanging. 16.♗g1 looks very
 natural with the idea to prepare e3-e4. The young players are
 full with youthful optimism and they love king side attacks, so
 small wonder White preferred



Diagram 22

16.g4!? ♜f6 17.h4 b6? Too
 slow. Black had to do something
 against the forecoming king side
 attack. 17...h5!? was worth
 daring, allowing the piece
 sacrifice on g6 followed by the
 knight manoeuvre from e6 to
 g7. 18.♞g1 ♗b7 19.h5 White
 has an irresistible attack now.

19...♞ac8? 20. ♗h4 ♜d7 21.f4!
 ♞g7 22.♝d2 ♗e7 23.♗g3 ♝d8 24.f5!. To use the soccer
 terminology, the visiting team is kicking off the ball away from
 the penalty area.

24...♗g5 25.fg fg 26.♜f4 gh 27.gh ♜f6 28.h6! An elegant
 finish to an enterprising attack. 28...♗:h6 29.♝h2 ♗g5
 30.♗h4 ♗:h4 31.♝:h4 ♜e4 32.♞:g7+! ♞:g7 33.♞g1+ Black
 resigns.

Let go back now to the expert chess.

Kasparov – Andersson

Belfort 1988

1. d4 ♖f6 2. c4 e6 3. ♗c3 d5 4. cd ed 5. ♗g5 c6 6. ♖c2
♗e7 7. e3 ♗bd7 8. ♗d3 0-0 9. ♗ge2 ♖e8 10. 0-0 ♗f8 11. f3
♗e6 12. ♖ae1 ♖c8 13. ♗h1 ♗6d7 14. ♗:e7 ♖:e7.



Diagram 23

15. ♗f4. The world champion is not in a hurry to push forward his central pawns and develops his pieces in the most harmonious way first. 15... ♖c7?! The game plan, started with this move meets with an original tactical refutation. G. Kasparov, commenting the game in the

"Chess Informant" 45, recommended 15... ♗f6 16. ♖d2 ♖d7, after which he intended to tear Black's queen side to pieces by means of 17. b4. 16. ♖f2 ♗f6 17. e4 de 18. fe ♖cd7 19. d5! A sudden breakthrough.

19... cd 20. ♗b5! White wouldn't have anything substantial after 20. ed?! ♗:d5 21. ♗f:d5 ♗:d5 22. ♗:d5 (22. ♖:e7?! ♖:e7!) 22... ♖:e1 23. ♖:e1 ♖:d5 24. ♗c4 ♖d7 25. ♖:a7 ♖d1 with equality. (Kasparov)

20... ♖c7 The exchange sacrifice wouldn't change the course of the game at all. In case of 20... de 21. ♗:d7 ♖:d7 22. ♗:e4 ♗:e4 23. ♖:e4 ♗:a2 24. ♖:e7 ♖:e7 25. ♖:a7 ♗c4 26. ♖c1 ♖e4 White had 27. ♖c5! paralysing the opponent completely. (Kasparov)

21. ed ♗d7. 21... ♗:d5 was losing after 22. ♗f:d5 ♗:d5 23. ♖d1 ♖e5 24. ♖d4.



Diagram 24

22. ♖e2! The essence of the idea of the world champion. After 22.d6? ♖:e1 23.♖:e1 Black had the wonderful stroke 23...♖:c3!, and after 22.♖:e7 ♖:e7 23.♙:d7 ♖:d7 24.♖:a7 Black was capturing the pawn back with 24...g5! Now threatening 23.d6 White simply wins the "a7" pawn. **22...♖c8**

23. ♖:a7. White could try the beautiful 23.♙h5 and 23...♙:h5 was losing after 24.d6! ♖:e2 25.♖:f7+ ♙h8 26.♖:e2 ♙f6 27.♖e7, but Black could play 23...♖e5! 24.♙:f6+ ♖:f6 25.♖:f6 gf with a satisfactory position, since he can answer 26.♖:f6 with 26...♖de8 (Kasparov's lines). **23...b6 24. ♖a6 ♙e4?!** U. Andersson does not play well in the time-trouble and loses easily. 24...♙g6 was much better. **25.d6! ♙:d6 26.♙fd5 ♖e5 27. ♖:b6.** White has now two connected passed pawns on the queen side. The rest is just a matter of routine technic. **27...♙f5 28. ♖:d8 ♖:d8 29.♙d3 ♖:e1 30. ♖:e1 ♙g6 31.a4 ♙f8 32.a5 ♙d4 33.♙:g6 hg 34.♖d1 ♙e6 35.♙b6 ♙c6 36.♖:d8+ ♙:d8 37.b4 ♙e6 38.b5** Black resigned.

Alexandrov – Ziatdinov Primorsko, 1990



Diagram 25

The first eleven moves were a repetition of the previous game. Now, White developed the queen's rook to d1 instead of the world champion's – 12.♖ae1.

12.♖ad1. Alexandrov's move is in tune with the strategical idea of White. Black answered

12...♟a5, preventing 13.e4. **13.a3! ♞ad8 14.♞h1**. White is not in a hurry. **14...♞c8**. Black's position is solid, but very passive. The pieces are beautifully and harmoniously developed in the centre, but if White manages to push forward the central pawns – Black's harmony will vanish in the haze. **15.♞h4!** The bishop strives for the "g1" square, otherwise it constantly hampers Whites manoeuvres. Had Black played 14...♞g6 on the previous move, White wouldn't have then ♞g5–h4–f2–g1, but still he could increase the pressure with ♞e2–g3–f5. **15...♞g6**. Black goes on playing move after move, without any game plan. He had to seriously think about counterplay. Since c6–c5 was unconstructive presently, 15...g6 deserved attention with the idea ♞f8–e6. The knight on g6 is very passive. Evidently R. Ziatdinov intended to fight for the "f4" square with his pieces. the moment the e3 pawn goes to e4, but all those hopes proved to be in vain. **16.♞f2 ♞d6?! 17.♞g1 ♞h5 18.b4!** The position of the black bishop on d6 makes this move possible, because after 18...♟:a3? 19.♞a1 ♟:b4 20.♞fb1 Black loses the queen. **18...♟c7 19.e4!** The right moment for the central breakthrough. Black can not play 19...♞hf4, because of 20.e5! and 20...♞:d3 is refuted by 21.ed. Here, just like in the game Botvinnik – Keres, the position of the black bishop on d6 brought Black disappointment only. **19...de 20. fe ♞f4**. Maybe, as if to substantiate the previous play, Black occupies the "f4" square with the bishop to only make White's task easier. By the way, Ziatdinov's position was already hardly defensible. **21.e5 ♞h6 22.♞f5! ♞e7 23.♞e4**. We have seen all that script in Botvinnik's games. He directed them in an exemplary way. **23...♞:f5 24.♞:f5 ♞hf4 25.♞:f4 ♞:f4 26.♞df1 ♞h6 27.g4!** White is collecting the ripe fruits of his strategy. There followed: **27...♞f4 28.♞5:f4 ♞:f4 29.♞:f4 f6 30. ♟b3+ ♞h8 31.♟f3 ♟d7 32.ef gf 33.♞:f6 ♟e6 34.d5! cd 35.♞d4 ♟e1+ 36.♞a2 ♟e2+ 37.♞a3 ♟:f3+ 38.♞:f3 ♞e6 39.a5 ♞a7**

40. ♖g4+ ♜g6 41. ♗h4 ♜8e8 42. ♜e5+ ♜g7 43. ♗h5 Black resigned.

I would like to add as an illustration to the aforementioned games, that when White's knight is on a2, the knight manoeuvre to e4 is not too effective neither on move 11, nor (after 11...h6 12. ♗h4) on move 12. In the game Shereshevsky – Aslanov, Minsk 1981, after 11...h6 12. ♗h4 ♜e4 13. ♗:e7 ♜:e7 White played 14. ♜ae1?!. I intended to prepare the advance of the central pawns. 14...♜df6 15.f3 It was interesting to check 15.♜d1 leaving one additional light piece on the board. 15...♜:c3 16.♜:c3 c5. Black does not allow the pawn move e3 – e4, but meanwhile he gets an unpleasant endgame. 17.d4 ♜:c5 18.♜b5! ♜:c2 19.♗:c2.



Diagram 26

I have devoted a whole chapter to endgames of this type, in my book "Endgame Strategy". Positions like that are very difficult for Black, after a precise play, defendable though. In this case however, two pairs of rooks are present on the board, which enables White to try to create one more

weakness on the king side, pushing forward the "h" and "g" pawns after some preparation. Besides, the threat 20. ♜c7 is rather unpleasant. My resourceful opponent played 19...♗d7?! and I, after some meditation, answered 20. ♜d4?!, although after 20. ♜c7! ♜ec8 21.♜:a8 ♜:c2 22.♜c1 ♜:b2 23.♜f2 Black had no sufficient compensation for the exchange. I was really so much tempted to play an endgame that I had been working on previously, so consequently I managed to win after about 80 moves! Notwithstanding, but to

play with Black the position on the last diagram is hardly advisable.

To conclude – I would like to add that lately White succeeds to prepare the pawn advance in the centre with the help of castling Queen side. The Latvian grandmaster A. Shirov is a devoted exponent of such type of play in the opening. Before I start dealing with the move 3...♗e7 thoroughly, I would like to mention that I have never tried to teach my students to get an opening advantage in the abstract sense of this word. What is important is that they should know the strategical plans in the position, and to be always ready to seize the initiative and to strive for complex struggle over the board.

According to the theoretical monographies the move 3...♗e7 was invented by the Soviet master V. Alatorzev. Now, if White wants to play the Karlbard system he has to comply with the modest development of the queen's bishop to f4 after 4.cd ed 5.♗f4. This continuation was tried multiple times in competitions at the highest level i.e.: the World Championship matches Botvinnik – Petrosian 1963; Karpov – Kortchnoi, 1981; Karpov – Kasparov, 1985; Kasparov – Karpov, 1986 and 1987; a lot of candidates matches as well as in plenty of strong tournaments and Olympiads. The arising positions are typical with the dynamic pawn structure on the king side and in the centre. They attract the attention both of players fond of initiative and pawn advances, as well as of players who like to counter-attack. Players like that love to use the defects of the pawn structure of the opponent that are usually left after too active actions. In short, you can learn a lot by studying the games of players of extra-class. Lets start well back in the history with the match **Botvinnik – Petrosian**. Game 14 of their match in 1963, started with: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗e7 4.cd ed 5.♗f4 c6. Black is fighting for the diagonal "b1 – h7" 6.e3 ♗h5 7.g4! ♗e6 A practically

forced move. To 7...♙g6?! White had the sidestroke 8.h4! and 8...♙:h4 is bad because of 9.♖b3 b6 10.♗:h4! ♖:h4 11.♕:d5 and to 8...h5 – 9.g5 or 8...h6 9.h5 and White occupies space advantage on the king side. **8.h3**. In this position 8.♙d3 was possible, as played by Botvinnik in the 12th game of the match, as well as 8.h4!? – also Botvinnik's invention, played by him in his game with Spasski in Leiden 1970. **8...♜f6 9.♙d3 c5**. It looks like everything is according to the rules – Black is reacting with a center counter-stroke to the offence on the king side. White does not intend to isolate the "d5" pawn by opening the position, but continues to calmly develop his pieces. **10.♜f3 ♜c6 11.♝f1!** White's king will stay comfortably on g2 and the rook "h1" will be active from its original square. The position of the white pawn on g4 is not extraordinary. On the contrary, the pawn is enabling the white pieces to occupy the "g2" and "g3" squares increasing White's space on the king side. **11...0-0 12.♙g2 cd 13.♜:d4! ♜:d4 14.ed** Exchanging the knights, White won the tempo to occupy the "f3" square with a pawn. **14...♜d7 15.♖c2!** ♜f6 Petrosian retreats with the knight. In case of 15...g6, Black had to consider the possibility 16.♙h6 ♖e8 17.f4, and to 15...h6 16.♖d2 would have been very strong intending ♙d3–c2 and ♖d2–d3 next. **16.f3 ♖c8 17.♙e5**



Diagram 27

White seized the initiative completely. Black has no weaknesses, his piece coordination is also not so bad, but still the position is not very pleasant. Its main drawback is the lack of perspective to create a constructive plan of counterplay. If we try once again to make an analogy with

soccer – one of the teams is pressing forward trying to score a goal, while the other team is just watching the actions of the opponents trying to neutralize them without even a hint of an effective counterattack. **17... ♖d6**. Petrosian is trying to simplify but the dark square bishop's exchange, when both sides have isolated pawns, is definitely in favour of White. **18. ♖ae1 ♗:e5 19. ♖:e5**. 19.de? would be a positional blunder because of 19...d4 20.ef ♖:f6. **19...g6 20. ♖f2 ♗d7 21. ♖e2 ♗b6 22. ♖he1!** "The movement of the "h" pawn looked tempting but after 22.h4 ♖f6 23.h5 ♗g7 (or 23...♗c4) White was too much restricted. I decided that White should not play too straightforward in this position." – (Botvinnik) **22... ♗c4**. Black is somehow trying to play actively but after the exchange of the light pieces the White knight will be much better than the enemy bishop. **23. ♗:c4 ♖:c4** If 23...dc, 24.d5 and 25.♖d4. **24. ♖d2 ♖e8 25. ♖e3 a6 26. b3 ♖c6 27. ♗a4 b6 28. ♗b2 a5 29. ♗d3 f6.**



Diagram 28

30.h4! White played this move after all, but not with the idea of a king side attack. Botvinnik prepares the occupation of the "e5" square pushing forward the "g" pawn. **30... ♗f7 31. ♖:e8+ ♗:e8 32. ♖e3 ♗f7 33.g5 ♗e6 34. ♗f4 ♗f7**. The bishop has to retreat. To 34...♗f5 35.gf ♖:f6 36.♖e5 might follow and Black loses the d5 pawn. **35. ♗d3 ♗e6 36.gf ♖:f6 37. ♖g5! ♖:g5+ 38.hg**



Diagram 29

The position has simplified into an endgame, difficult for Black. Petrosian's aiming at counterplay, but he blunders on his next move making his position even worse. **38...a4** **39.ba** "The alternative was 39.♖e5 ♖c3 40.ba ♖a3 41.♖b2 ♖:a4 42.♖:b6 ♖:a2+ etc. White didn't play this, considering that

it would be better to keep the "a" pawns." – (Botvinnik)

39...♖c4 40.a5! ba 41.♖c5 ♖f5 42.♗g3 a4 43.♗f4 a3 44.♗e5 ♖b4 45.♖d3 ♖b5 46.♗d6 ♗f7 47.♗c6 ♖:d3 48.♖:d3 ♖b2 49.♖:a3 ♖g2 50.♗:d5 ♖:g5+ 51.♗c6 h5 52.d5 ♖g2 53.d6 ♖c2+ 54.♗d7 h4?! Botvinnik mentioned that even after the best 54...g5! 55.♖a5! ♗f6 56.♗d8 h4 57.d7 h3 58.♖a6+ ♗g7 59.♖e6 h2 60.♖e1 White should win.

55.f4 ♖f2 56.♗c8 ♖:f4 57.♖a7+. Black resigned.

A wonderful game in which Black didn't make a single blunder but still was outplayed completely.

Kortchnoi – Karpov

Merano, 1981

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♖c3 ♖e7 4.cd ed 5.♖f4 c6 6.e3 ♖f5 7.g4 ♖e6 8.h3 ♗f6 9.♖d3 c5 10.♗f3 ♖c6 11.♗f1 0-0 12.♗g2 ♖c8 Petrosian played **12...cd 13.♖c1 ♖e8.** V. Lepeshkin and D. Plisetsky criticize the last move of Black proposing **13...a6** instead, in their revue of the book "The World Championship Match – Merano 81" The following variation comes next: **14.dc ♖:c5 15.♖b5 ♖e7 16.♖bd4 ♖:d4 17.♖:c8 ♖:c8 18.♖:d4 (18.ed ♖e4 19.♖e1 f5) 18...♖d6 19.♖:d6 ♗:d6 20.♗c2 ♖e8 and ♖e4 next.** "We think that the

weaknesses on the king side do not allow White to rely on any substantial advantage." – the authors conclude.



Diagram 30

It looks like White doesn't have any serious advantage, but Black's defence, after 21.♖c1 threatening 22.♙:c8, or other queen moves to c5 or c7, is still very difficult. I have to say that A. Karpov was playing better than V. Kortchnoi in their match in

1981 and won convincingly. The comments to this match were too much one-sided. The reason was that it was a real mess then, between chess and politics. Lets go back to the game, though.

14. d4 ♕:c5 15. ♖b5 ♕f8 16. ♖fd4! ♖:d4. M. Tal annotating this game in the "64 – Shakhmatnoe Obozrenie" 21/1981 suggests instead of the last move of Black 16...♙b6!? 17.♙b3 ♖:d4 having in mind to meet 18.ed with the sharp 18...♖c4!? and after 18.♖:d4 "you can not speak about anything more than just a slight advantage for White." I studied a lot of endgames like that and devoted a whole chapter to them in my book "Endgame Strategy". Black's position is defend able after a precise play, but usually the task to defend it is not always easy.

17. ♖:c8 ♙:c8 18.ed! Botvinnik's idea. **18...♙d7 19. ♖c7 ♖c8 20. ♖:e6 fe 20...♙:e6** is impossible because of 21.♕f5.



Diagram 31

White's advantage is out of the question. White has two bishops, better piece development and a lot a space to manoeuvre. Additionally there will be a weak pawn on e6 in the Black's position. **21. ♖e1 a6** Tal thought 21... ♗f7 best.

22. g5!? White could play quietly, but Kortchnoi prefers to

press home the advantage energetically.

22... ♖e4 23. ♗g4 ♗b4 24. ♖e2 ♖f8 25. f3 ♗f7 26. ♗e5 ♖d2 27. a3. It becomes very complicated now. Tal pointed out that White had a technical win after 27. f4 ♖e4 28. ♖:e4 de 29. ♗c4 ♗h8 30. ♗:e6 ♗e7 31. f5.

27... ♖:f3 28. g6?! "Black's inventiveness would have been insufficient if White had played now 28. ♗g3! threatening 29. ab or 29. ♖f2." – Tal. 28... ♖h4+ wouldn't help too much after 29. ♗h2 ♖f3+ 30. ♗h1 ♖h4 because of 31. ♗:h7+ ♗:h7 32. ♗:h4+ ♗g8 33. ♖f2.

28... hg 29. ♗g3



Diagram 32

29... ♗e7? Both opponents made mistakes. A lot of people commenting the match mentioned that Black could save the game with a fantastic tactical resource 29... ♖h4+!!. The knight can not be captured. After 30. ♗:h4 ♗f3+, as for 30. ♗:h4 ♗f1+ 31. ♗h2 ♗d6+ 32. ♗g3 ♖f2+.

What is left is 30. $\text{c}2\text{-h}2$ $\text{d}3+$ 31. $\text{c}1\text{-h}1$ and now once again 31... $\text{d}4!!$ and Black can not lose as you can see in the following variations:

a) 32. $\text{b}2\text{-f}2?$ $\text{d}5!$

b) 32. $\text{b}2\text{-c}2?$ $\text{c}3+$ 33. $\text{c}3\text{-f}3$ $\text{b}3\text{-f}3$ 34. $\text{d}4\text{-h}4$ $\text{d}6$ 35. $\text{c}2\text{-g}2$ $\text{b}3\text{-d}3$

c) 32. $\text{d}4\text{-h}4$ $\text{c}3\text{-f}1+$ 33. $\text{c}2\text{-h}2$ $\text{d}6+$ or 33. $\text{c}3\text{-g}1$ $\text{c}3\text{-h}3+$ 34. $\text{b}2\text{-h}2$ $\text{c}3\text{-f}3+$

d) 32. $\text{c}3\text{-h}4$ $\text{c}3\text{-f}3+$ 33. $\text{b}2\text{-g}2$ $\text{c}3\text{-d}3$ 34. $\text{a}2\text{-b}1$ $\text{b}1\text{-f}1+$ 35. $\text{c}2\text{-h}2$ $\text{c}3\text{-d}1$ or 35. $\text{b}2\text{-g}1$ $\text{c}3\text{-f}3+$ 36. $\text{c}2\text{-h}2$ $\text{c}3\text{-e}2+$ 37. $\text{b}2\text{-g}2$ $\text{c}3\text{-d}1$ and White has nothing better than a perpetual. After the move in the game White can easily press the advantage home. There followed:

30. $\text{b}2\text{-f}2$ $\text{d}1\text{-e}1+$ 31. $\text{c}1\text{-h}1$ $\text{c}2\text{-f}2$ 32. $\text{d}4\text{-f}2$ $\text{d}3\text{-d}3$ 33. $\text{c}3\text{-e}6+$ $\text{b}7\text{-f}7$ 34. $\text{d}3\text{-g}3$ $\text{d}1\text{-b}2$ 35. $\text{c}3\text{-d}5$ $\text{d}5\text{-f}6$ 36. $\text{d}6\text{-g}5$ 37. $\text{c}3\text{-b}3$ $\text{d}4\text{-d}4$ 38. $\text{c}3\text{-e}6$ $\text{g}6$ 39. $\text{c}3\text{-e}8+$ $\text{c}7\text{-g}7$ 40. $\text{d}5\text{-e}5+$ $\text{d}5\text{-e}5$ 41. $\text{c}3\text{-e}5+$ $\text{c}7\text{-h}7$ 42. $\text{c}3\text{-b}2$. The game was adjourned now but Black resigned. No fortress can be built.



Diagram 33

This position is the best that Black can do. White wins transposing into a pawn endgame, sacrificing the queen on f5.

The game Taimanov – Rukavina was played in the Interzonal Tournament in Leningrad in 1973, and was considered to be one of the best

games of the tournament. After **8. $\text{h}3$ $\text{d}6$** (bad is 8... $\text{h}5!$ 9. $\text{g}4$ $\text{d}7$ 10. $\text{d}2\text{-e}2$ $\text{d}6\text{-f}6$ 11. $\text{b}2\text{-h}2!$ $\text{d}6\text{-d}6$ 12. $\text{d}4\text{-d}6$ $\text{c}3\text{-d}6$ 13. $\text{b}2\text{-g}2!$ with advantage for White – Kortchnoi – Ivkov, Budva 1976.) **9. $\text{d}3$ $\text{d}6$** B. Spaski played like that against V. Kortchnoi in their candidates match in 1968 in Kiev. Kortchnoi failed to get any advantage in the opening but M. Taimanov, in the game we are looking over right now, managed to almost refute Black's

plan. **10. ♖ge2 h6?!** The creation of this weakness was hardly necessary. As Taimanov said after the game it would have been better **10... ♕:f4 11. ♖:f4 ♖d6. 11. ♖b3 ♕c8 12. 0-0-0 ♖a6.** (Diagram 34)

13. ♖de1 "The strategical plan of White is clear. White threatens to open the "e" line (by e3-e4 or e3:f4 with an exchange) and to keep the black king on the king side and then by pushing forward the "g" pawn i.e. g4-g5 to open the "g" file. Black is virtually helpless against this plan." – (Taimanov).



Diagram 34

13... ♖c7 14. ♖hg1 ♕:f4?!
14... ♖e6 was much more logical. **15. ♖:f4. 15. ef** looked not so bad. **15... ♖d6 16. g5 hg 17. ♖:g5 ♖f8 17... g6** would be followed by **18. ♖e5+. 18. ♖eg1 ♖ce8 19. ♖ce2 b6 20. ♖b1!** A very useful preparatory move before the central offensive. **20... ♖h6.** Bad is **20... ♕:h3 21. ♖h1 ♖d7 22. ♖g3. 21. f3 ♖h7** After **21... ♕:h3 22. e4** White had a strong attack. **22. ♖5g3 ♕e6 23. ♖c2 ♖g8 24. e4! de 25. fe ♖f8 26. ♖c3!**



Diagram 35

White obtained a winning position with a simple and logical play. Black is not capable to offer anything against the advance of his opponent in the centre and the king side attack. **26... f6 27. d5** was the threat. **27. e5! ♖e7 27... fe** is not much better after

28.de ♖d7 29.♗d4 28.♗:e6 ♗:e6 29.♖:c6 ♗d8 30.♗c4 fe
 31.♗g6! ♗d6 32.♖c8 ♗:g6 33.♗:g6 ♗f7 34.♗:e6! ♗:e6 35.de
 g5 36.♗d4 ♗g7 37.a4 a6 Black can move only pawns.
 38.♗d5 b5 39.a5 b4 40.♗b3 g4 41.hg. Black resigned.

Lets turn our attention to the present days. The titanic fight between Kasparov and Karpov was omnipresent with Queen's Gambits. The position after 5.♗f4 was played five times in their matches in 1985 and 1986. Both opponents were playing it, curiously enough, for both sides. In the 21st game of the match in 1985, *Kasparov* was White: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♗e7 4.cd ed 5.♗f4 c6 6.e3 ♗f5 7.g4 ♗e6 8.h4 ♗bd7. Commenting the game that gave birth to this variation: Botvinnik – Spassky, Leiden 1970, the ex-world champion wrote: "...I found out that to accept the pawn sacrifice is very dangerous for Black: 8...♗:h4 9.♖b3 b6 (9...♗c8 10.e4) 10.♗f3 ♗e7 11.♗:b8 ♗:b8 12.♗e5 ♗c8 (12...♗d7 13.e4) 13.♖a4 b5 14.♖:a7..." The contemporary theory adds some precision to Botvinnik's analysis. After 9.♖b3 9...g5 might follow – 10.♗h2 ♖b6 (10...♗:g4? 11.♖:b7 ♖e7 12.♖:a8 ♖:e3+ 13.♗e2 ♖:f2+ 14.♗d2 and White won soon in the game Vaiser – Dias, Havana 1985.) 11.♗f3 ♖:b3 (11...♗:g4 was worth considering) 12.ab ♗:g4 13.♗:h4 gh 14.♗:b8 ♗:b8 15.♗:a7 and White is better.

9.h5 ♗h6!? This is a novelty. The game Botvinnik – Spassky went on 9...♖b6. (As Botvinnik pointed out in case of 9...♗f6 10.f3 b5 White gets an advantage after 11.♗ge2 ♗b6 12.♗c1 ♗c4 13.♗d3) 10.♗b1 ♗f6 11.f3 h6 12.♗d3 ♖a5 13.♗e2 b5 14.♗c1! ♖d8 15.♗b3 0-0 16.♗e2 a5 17.♗g3? "I was calculating here the natural continuation 17.♗c1 a4 18.♗c5 ♗:c5 19.dc ♗d7 and decided that there was no sense to sacrifice a pawn because the position was good as it was. That was a simple case of irresolution. I noticed immediately after the game that 20.♗b1! (20...♗:c5 21.♗:c5 ♗:c5 22.♖c2) led to a winning position for White." – (Botvinnik) Playing

17. $\text{d}g3$? White lost his advantage. The game went on 17...a4 18. $\text{d}c1$ c5! 19. $\text{d}f5$ $\text{d}:f5$ 20. $\text{d}:f5$ cd 21. ed $\text{c}b6$ 22. $\text{d}e2$ $\text{d}d6$ 23. $\text{c}d2$ $\text{d}:f4$ 24. $\text{d}:f4$ $\text{d}e8+$ 25. $\text{c}f1$ $\text{d}b8$ and a draw was agreed. E. Geller playing against R. Knaak in Moscow 1982, tried to improve Black's game in comparison with the game Botvinnik – Spassky playing 12...c5 instead of 12. $\text{c}a5$, but without too much success. After 13. $\text{d}ge2$ $\text{d}c8$ 14. $\text{c}f1$ 0-0 15. g5! hg 16. $\text{d}:b5$ $\text{d}fe8$ 17. $\text{c}e1$ cd 18. ed $\text{d}h7$ 18. $\text{d}:e7$ $\text{d}:e7$ 20. $\text{c}g3$ $\text{d}df8$ 21. $\text{c}f2$ f6 22. $\text{d}c2!$ $\text{d}f7$ 23. $\text{d}b3$ $\text{d}ce8$ 24. $\text{d}bd1$ $\text{d}g5$ 25. $\text{d}f4$ $\text{c}d6$ 26. $\text{d}d3$ b5 27. $\text{c}g4$ $\text{d}d7$ 28. h6 g6 29. $\text{d}c:d5$ a5 30. h7+ $\text{c}:h7$ 31. $\text{d}:g6$ Black lost on time. The whole game, annotated by the winner, can be found in the "Chess Informant"/33. Black had no better fate in the game Beliavsky – Geller in the USSR championship 1983. The first 11 moves were the same as in Knaak – Geller. This time instead of 11...h6, Geller played 11...0-0. The game went on 12. $\text{d}d3$ c5 13. $\text{d}ge2$ $\text{d}ac8$ 14. $\text{c}f1$ cd 15. ed $\text{d}d6$ 16. $\text{c}d2$ $\text{d}e8$ 17. $\text{c}g2$ $\text{c}d8$ 18. $\text{d}be1$ $\text{d}b6$ 19. $\text{d}b1$ $\text{d}c4$ 20. $\text{c}d3$ f5 21. $\text{d}c1$ $\text{d}f6$ 22. $\text{d}g3$ $\text{d}:g3$ 23. $\text{d}:e6$ fg 24. $\text{c}:g3$ $\text{d}e4+$ 25. $\text{d}:e4$ $\text{d}:f3+$ 26. $\text{c}:f3$ gf 27. $\text{d}g5$ $\text{d}d6$ 28. $\text{d}:h7+$ $\text{c}f8$ 29. $\text{d}f1$. Black resigned.

You can look over the whole game once again, with comments by grandmaster A. Beliavsky in the "Chess Informant"/35.

Now you can appreciate the importance of Karpov's novelty on the previous move. **10. $\text{d}e2$.**



Diagram 36

10... $\text{d}b6$ 11. $\text{d}c1$ $\text{d}d6$? The world champion, in his book "Two matches", criticizes this exchange offering 11... $\text{d}c4$ instead. According to Kasparov after 12. $\text{d}:c4$ dc 13. $\text{d}:h6$ gh, Black would have excellent counter-chances. Now White keeps firmly the initiative.

12. $\text{d}3$ $\text{d}f4$ 13. $\text{d}f4$ $\text{d}d7$ 14. $\text{Eg}1!$ Kasparov solves the problem of the safety of his king in the most original manner. The king will reside on the "d2" square! On the other hand White understands that Black has the same problem to solve (to castle queen-side), so he has to displace the enemy knight from f4 with the help of the pawn – g7–g5 move. White is not afraid of 14... $\text{Wh}4$, which can be followed by 15. $g5$ $\text{d}f5$ 16. $\text{Eg}4!$ $\text{Wh}1+$ 17. $\text{d}d2$. The touch of a real master! 14... $g5$ 15. hg hg 16. $\text{d}d2!$



Diagram 37

16... $\text{e}7$ 17. $b3!$ $g5$ 18. $\text{d}d3$ 0-0-0 19. $\text{Eh}1$ $f6$ 20. $\text{Eg}1$ $\text{d}f7$ 21. $\text{Eg}3!$ $\text{E}d6!$ Black has to comply with the queen's exchange because the threat 22. $\text{d}b5$ is very strong. As Kasparov pointed out 21... $\text{d}d6$ was losing after 22. $\text{d}c5$ $\text{d}e4+$? 23. $\text{d}3:e4$ de 24. $\text{d}a6!$

22. $\text{E}d6$ $\text{d}d6$ 23. $f3$ $\text{E}d8$ 24. $\text{d}c5$ $\text{d}d8$ 25. $\text{d}d3$ $\text{d}c8$ 26. $\text{d}e2$ $\text{d}a8?!$



Diagram 38

The endgame looks to be rather difficult for Black, meanwhile the last move is almost a blunder, overlooking:

27. $\text{d}h7!$ "Black has to choose now between two evils. One is to give up the "h" file (as it happened in the game), or the "e6" square i.e. 27... $\text{Eg}7$ 28. $\text{d}f5$ $\text{Eg}g8$ 29. $\text{d}g3$. I think Black had

better choose the second..." – (Kasparov) 27... $\text{E}f8$ 28. $\text{E}h6$ $\text{d}c7$ 29. $\text{d}g3$ $\text{d}f7$ 30. $\text{E}h2$ $\text{d}e6$ 31. $\text{d}d3$ $\text{d}g7$ 32. $\text{E}ch1$ $\text{e}e7$

33. f2 e8 . The world champion thought it was high time Black took care of creating counterplay with 33... b6! ? 34. f5! e:h2 35. e:h2 f:5 36. gf e:h8 37. e:h8 f:h8 38. e4 f7 39. g4 d6 40. e3 ? "Time, time... White was in time trouble and the lack of "time-minutes" caused the loss of time-tempo"! I thought that it would be very good to force Black to exchange on e4 improving the pawn-structure, but that was too slow and gave Karpov the opportunity to suddenly create counterplay. 40. h6 seems much more energetic (defending the "f5" pawn and threatening e4–e5) or 40. e3 (defending the "e4" pawn and threatening g3-h5). Indeed, those two opportunities are hardly comparable: 40. $\text{h6}?$! b6 41. e5 fe 42. de f7 43. f:7 e:7 44. e3 c5 45. f4 d4+ 46. e3 b7+ 47. g4 d3 48. f1 b5! 49. fg c4... and who wins? Much better is 40. e3 b6 41. h5! Now after 41... e8 42. b4! (preventing c6-c5) with g4-h6 and e4-e5 next, Black can not survive, and the piece sacrifice 41... de 42. fe f:5+ 43. ef e:5 44. h:f6 e6 gives only small practical chances. I think White should win (45. b4 , with the idea 46. d5+ cd 47. e4)" – Kasparov 40... de 41. fe b6 The sealed move. 42. b4 a6 43. g4 b5 Here suddenly, Kasparov saw that his analysis was wrong. On the intended 44. e3 , 44... a3! would follow with the threat 45... c2+ . "I was so disappointed with my home-analysis mistake, (Besides the memory of the two points advantage was still fresh!) that I decided to finish off with this game." – (Kasparov) 44. e3 a3 Draw.

As we can see, after 6... f5 7. g4 e6 White can choose between the aggressive move 8. h4 , and the timid 8. h3 .

You can continue your development with 8. d3 d7 9. h3 h5 (9... g5! ?) 10. f3! ? Botvinnik in game 12 of his match with Petrosian played here 10. gh df6 11. h6 h:6 12. c2 h5 13. e5 f6 14. h2 d6 15. g6+ f7 16. f3 and obtained a slightly better position.

10... ♖b6. The "g4" pawn is poisoned. 10...hg 11.hg ♖:h1 12.♖:h1 ♜:g4 was losing after 13.♖h8 ♜f8 14.♜h7 ♜f6 15.♜e5 ♜:h7 16.♖:g7+.

11.0-0-0 hg 12.hg ♖:h1 13.♖:h1 g5 14.♜g3 ♜:g4 15.♜d2 ♜e6 16.♖h2 0-0-0 17.♜b5. All that was played in the game Miles – Georgadze, 1981/1982, which was won by White and commented by the winner in the "Chess Informant"/33.

Lately, Black often gives up the fight for the diagonal "b1–h7" or tries to occupy it, preventing g2–g4 and provoking the complications arising after ♖b3. All this could look like: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♜c3 ♜e7 4.cd ed 5.♜f4 ♜f6 6.e3 ♜f5 7.♖b3 ♜c6 8.♖:b7 ♜b4 9.♜5+ ♜f8 10.♜d2 ♜d6 (The game Salov – Timoshchenko, Irkutsk 1986 went on 10...a6 11.♜a4 ♜d3 12.♜:c7 ♖c8 13.♖:c8 ♖:c8 14.♜a5! ♜:f2 15.♖f1 ♜f6e4+ 16.♜:e4 ♜:e4+ 17.♜e2 ♜d6 18.♜f3 and White had the advantage) 11.♜:d6 cd 12.a3 ♖b8 13.♖:a7 ♖a8 14.ab ♖:a7 15.♖:a7 and White had a sufficient compensation for the Queen. In the 8th game of the second match in 1986, Kasparov – Karpov, Black castled short on move six. Kasparov developed the bishop

7.♜d3! I have already mentioned that the opponents had a discussion on this variation playing for both sides. The 22nd game of their previous match was played with colors reversed e.g. Kasparov was Black. Karpov played 7.♜f3 which led to an interesting game with about equal chances after 7...♜f5 8.h3 c6 9.g4 ♜g6 10.♜e5 ♜fd7 11.♜:g6 fg.

7...c5! 8.♜f3! Black exploited the presently weak control of White over the "d4" square and made a centre blow. White decides not to isolate the enemy central pawn, since after 8.dc ♜:c5 9.♜f3 ♜c6 10.0-0 d4! 11.♜a4 ♜d6! 12.♜:d6 ♖:d6 13.♜:d4 ♜:d4 14.ed ♜g4! the position is equal. (Kasparov's variation)

8...♖c6 9.0-0 White is not afraid of the mutually isolated central pawns. In case of 9...cd 10.♗:d4 ♗:d4 11.ed ♖b6 12.♖e1 ♗e6 13.♗a4 ♖a5 14.a3 with b2–b4 next and White has some initiative.

9...♗g4 10.dc ♗:c5 11.h3 ♗:f3. The retreat of the black bishop to h5 is impossible because after 12.g4 ♗g6 13.♗:g6 hg 14.g5 Black is losing the "d5" pawn.

12.♖:f3 d4. Black has excellent tactical motivation for the central pawn advance. 13.ed ♗:d4 14.♖:b7? is bad for White because of 14...♗e6!.

13.♗e4! ♗e7. In his work "Two Matches" the world champion pointed out that the exchange of the knight on e4 was dangerous for Black. This is Kasparov's main line: 13...♗:e4 14.♗:e4 (14.♖:e4 g6) de 15.♖h5 ef+ 16.♗h1 f5 17.♗:f5 g6 18.♗:g6 hg 19.♖:g6+ ♗h8 20.♖ad1 ♗d4 21.♖h5+ ♗g7 22.♗g4+ ♗h8 23.♗e3 ♗:e3 24.♖:d8 ♖a:d8 25.♖h4+ ♗g7 26.♖g3+ winning for White.



Diagram 39

"How should White continue now? For example 14.ed doesn't give White anything (In fact it is Black who should try to simplify.) 14...♖:d4 15.♖ad1 ♖b6 and the position is about equal. White has a clear advantage after: 14.♗:f6 ♗:f6 15.e4 ♗e5 16.♗:e5 ♗:e5 17.♖e2 with

the idea f2–f4, but the position was becoming too simple. I wanted much more: to regroup my pieces in the centre, to finish the development and then to proceed to a king side attack. The rook move to d1 is an integral part of this plan, but once again the eternal dilemma: which rook to put on this square – the queen rook or the king rook.

I decided that after 14.♖ad1 White has excellent piece concentration, while the other rook on f1 will have good chances to participate in the struggle on the king side." – Kasparov.

14.♖ad1 ♜a5. The world champion was looking over 14...♜b6 as an alternative but thought that the move played by Karpov was better.

15.♜g3! White could play after 14...♜b6 15.♙g5, or 15.♙d6! and the second, of course was better. The move 14...♜a5 looks bad after 15.♙g5. But as Kasparov pointed out, with the help of some tactics 15...♜e4! Black could neutralize the initiative of the opponent. For example 16.♜e4 (16.♙e7 ♜d2!) 16...g6 17.♙e7 ♜fe8 18.b4! (18.♜h4 ♜e7 18.ed ♜b4! 20.♙e4 ♜ae8 21.♙c6 bc) 18...♜c7! (18...♜b6 19.♙c5) 19.b5 ♜e7 20.♜h4 de! 21.bc e2. "You remember the difficult choice – which rook to go to "d1" with; now you can see the point" (Kasparov).

15...de 16.fe ♜a2! Karpov snatches a pawn and is ready to defend with the queen from the "e6" square.

17.♜f5! ♜e6 18.♙h6! ♜e8. 18...♜e5 is bad after 19.♜b7.

19.♜h5! g6! the only move. 19...♜f6? is bad after 20.♜e7+ ♜e7 21.♜f6 gf (21...♜f6 22.♙h7+ and 23.♙g5) 22.♙f8 ♜f8 (22...♜e3+ also loses to 23.♜h1 ♜f8 24.♙c4! ♜g6 25.♜h7 ♜e7 26.♜h6+) 23.♜h6+ ♜e8 24.♜g7! ♜e3+ 25.♜h1 ♜g5 26.♙b5+ ♜c6 27.♜e1 with a decisive attack. (Comments by Kasparov)

20.♜g4 ♜e5! a necessary move. If 20...♙f6? 21.♙c4! wins.



Diagram 40

21. ♖g3!? "I was trying to determine the outcome of the game by means of a king side attack at any rate. In this case, however there was a much better way i.e. 21. ♖:e7+ ♜e7 22. ♜:f8 ♝:f8 23. ♜f4. White was winning the exchange, with a transition into a technical stage, despite that to win the game

wouldn't be easy at all against Karpov – a great master of defence in such positions." (Kasparov) **21... ♜f6!** Black will have now an excellent compensation for the exchange – a very strong dark square bishop. **22. ♜b5!** ♜g7! **23. ♜:g7 ♜:g7 24. ♜d6 ♜b3 25. ♖:g7 ♜:b5.** The rest of the game was affected too much by the time-trouble and both players were trying to win. The world champion was luckier. **26. ♜f5 ♜ad8 27. ♜f6 ♜d2 28. ♜g5 ♜:b2 29. ♜h1 ♜h8 30. ♜d4 ♜:d4 31. ♜:e5** and Black lost on time. The final position is hopeless for Black. The world champion gives the following variation in confirmation: 31... ♜d2 32. ♜e7 ♜dd8 33. ♜:f7 ♜:f7 34. ♜:f7 ♜g8 35. e4 ♜c1+ (35...g5 36. ♜f5 ♜a8 37. ♜h2 ♜d4 38. e5 and White wins) 36. ♜h2 ♜h6 37. e5 ♜f8 38. e6 g5 39. ♜:f8+ ♜:f8 40. ♜:g5+ ♜h8 (40... ♜g7 41. ♜d8+ ♜f8 42. e7) 41. e7 ♜e8 42. h4! h5 43. g4! hg 44. h5 ♜h7 45. ♜g6+. The moves from 26th till 30th were very difficult for both sides and the variations were rather complicated. Karpov made a decisive mistake on the 28th move. After 28... ♜h8 Black could hold. The readers who would like to get acquainted with this game and its many fine points, can look it over in the Kasparov's book "Two Matches".

Some time later, another ex-world champion M. Tal tried to defend Black's position against Kasparov.

Kasparov – Tal

Scellefteo, 1989

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♖c3 ♗e7 4.cd ed 5.♗f4 ♘f6 6.e3 0-0
7.♗d3 c5 8.♘f3 ♖c6 9.0-0 cd Karpov played 9...♗g4.
10.♙:d4 ♗g4 11.♙a4! In the "Chess Informant"/48 G. Kasparov
analysed the move 11.♙b3 thoroughly and proved that Black
can provoke favourable complications with 11...♘h5.
11...♙:d4?! Black cannot achieve equality with this move.
White can meet 11...♙b6 with the favourable 12.♙b5,
because of that Kasparov recommends 11...♙d7. We
sympathize with Tal, since to anticipate further the brilliant
strategy of White was practically impossible. 12.♙:d4 ♙d7
13.h3 ♗e6 14.♗fd1 ♗fc8.



Diagram 41

Some time ago I had been lucky to have read the wonderful comments of grandmaster B. Larsen during his best period, when he was playing his match with Tal. He had to fight against the isolated pawn. He tried to react with the traditional methods: block the pawn, occupy the neighbouring

"c" file with the rooks, simplify the position, yet he didn't have any particular success. Then the hot-tempered Larsen exclaimed that the isolated pawn should not be blocked at all, but it should be attacked and accordingly won. I have plenty of experience of playing with an isolated pawn on the Black side of the French defence and I have to admit that what Larsen said is true, almost to the point. While the white pieces manoeuvre around the pawn, Black can be calm. But the moment the white pieces regroup with the intention to capture the pawn Black has often to find "only moves". This attacking

strategy is not always so easy for White to accomplish, because most of the times White is weakening the control over the key square "d4". It is very interesting to see how the world champion, with the help of some tactical tricks, rearranges his pieces, attacks and finally captures the "d5" pawn.

15. ♖e5! h6 16. ♖d2 ♗d8! 17. ♖c2! Playing his last, modest looking but subtle move, Tal created the not too obvious positional threat 17...♖d7, so if White had played carelessly 17. ♖ad1 ♖d7! and Black solved all his opening problems. For example 18. ♖:d5 ♖c5 19. ♗e4 f5 20. ♗f4 ♖:e5 21. ♖:f5 ♖:f5 22. ♗:f5 ♗e8 and White has some compensation for the piece but not much more than that. **17... ♗a5.** Here however, 17...♖d7 was impossible because of 18. ♖:g7! ♖c5 19. ♗d3 ♖:g7 20. ♗h7 ♖f8 21. ♗h6+ ♖e8 22. ♖:d5 with a decisive attack. (Kasparov) **18. ♗d3!** Another very precise move. 18. ♖ad1? ♖c4 19. ♗d3 doesn't bring White anything after 19...♖e4! 20. f3 f6! 21. fe de! 22. ♖:e4 ♗:e5. (Kasparov) **18... ♖f8?!** The world champion thought that it would have been better to play 18...♖d8. 18...♖e4? didn't work because of 19. ♖:e4 de 20. ♗:e4 f5 21. ♖c3. **19. ♖ad1 ♖d8 20. ♗d4!** Wonderful move. The white queen retreats preventing the threat 20...♖e4. 20. ♖b3? would be a mistake after 20...♖e4.

20... ♖ac8 21. ♖b3 Now, five white pieces are pointed at the "d5" pawn and its doom is just a matter of time. **21... ♖g8 22. ♗f4 ♖d7.**



Diagram 42

23. ♗g3! The world champion shows a delicate technical touch. The alluring 23.e4?! would have allowed Black to avoid immediate defeat with the help of some interesting tactics: 23...♖h5 24. ♗f3 (24. ♗e3 d4!) de! 25. ♗:h5 ♖:d2 26. ♖:d2 g6 27. ♖d5! ♗:c3! (27...♖:d5

28. ♖h6 ♕f8 29. ♗g5) 28. ♖:c3 gh 29. ♗:h5 ♖:b3 30. ab ♗c6. (Kasparov). The "banal" 23. ♖:f6 was possible but White doesn't want the position with bishops of opposite colors arising after 23... ♖:f6 24. ♘:d5 ♖:d5 25. ♗:d5.

23... ♘h5 24. ♗f3 ♘f6 25. ♗d3! The final preparation. Once again five white pieces are attacking the "d5" pawn and the 6th – ♖e5 is attacking the defender of the pawn. This is a total strategical triumph!

25... a6 26. ♖:f6 ♖:f6 27. ♖:d5! ♗cd8. 27... ♖:c3 was losing after 28. ♖:e6. **28. e4 ♖:c3 29. ♖:e6 ♗d3 30. ♗:f7+ ♘h8 31. ♗:d3 ♖f6 32. ♗:d8+ ♗:d8.**



Diagram 43

33. ♗:b7?? This is a blunder that has no precedence in Kasparov's games. It looks like fate decided this day to mar the wonderful picture painted by the world champion. After 33.g3 there was not much sense to continue the game further.

33... ♗d1 + 34. ♘h2 ♗d6+ 35.g3 ♗:e6 Tal accepted the

gift but he didn't manage to achieve more than a draw in this position which was played for twenty five more moves, not without some adventures.

We have met now some different plans for White and we have the options of choice. My students, as a rule, play usually the less compelling 8.h3, after 6... ♖f5 7.g4 ♖e6, while the world champion plays 8.h4. Petrosian in his game with Beliavsky in 1982 played 8. ♗d2 ♘f6 9. f3 c5 10. ♖b5+ ♘c6 11. dc ♖:c5 12. ♘a4 ♖e7 13. ♖h6 and got a wonderful position. The reader can find this game in the "Chess Informant"/33. The chess player that you have been working with, must have a clear concept of the strategical possibilities

and should strive for the initiative. I would like to dissuade the reader that the position is without any perspectives for Black and as an illustration I am going to include the game Botvinnik – Petrosian, the 18th of their match. I am going to use the thorough comments of the Dutch grandmaster Timman in the “Shakhmati in USSR” 7/1989, that I am going to abbreviate a little in the opening part to avoid repeating myself too often.

“T. Petrosian had a very original, difficult to repeat or reproduce style of playing. He left us wonderful examples of energetic attacks, precisely played endgames, since he was a profound and subtle player and he was a true professional in all stages of the game. I remember particularly well those games in which he managed to show the uniqueness of his style, i.e. games that you can tell about – that is “Petrosian” and nobody else. I think that one such game is the 18th of his match with Botvinnik in 1963. The match was developing rather dramatically until then. Botvinnik won game 14 and levelled the score at 7:7 (+2 –2 = 10). The challenger took the lead immediately after that winning game 15. The next two games ended in a draw, so the score before game 18 was 9:8 in favour of Petrosian.

Botvinnik was playing White and made some timid steps to try to equal the score. Well indeed, he was very precocious and instead of playing actively somehow he started to manoeuvre. In this aspect of the game – manoeuvring, Petrosian was unsurpassable. At first he defended calmly and then little by little took over the initiative. Somewhere around move 30 he hesitated and missed a very promising continuation. Despite that, he kept a small positional advantage which he managed to turn into a whole point at the adjournment. The game was not fairly evaluated then. M. Euwe wrote about this game as of some dull, every day event. Well, naturally that is not a game that might induce an applause in the tournament hall, but there are many things in

chess that can truly be appreciated only by experts. I have always been fascinated with this game. The reason is first of all – the mysterious and untiring manoeuvre of the black knights.

**Botvinnik – Petrosian
game 18, match 1963**

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗e7 4.cd ed 5.♗f4 c6 6.e3 ♗f5
7.g4 ♗e6 8.h3 ♘f6 9.♘f3 ♘bd7.** Petrosian thought for almost half an hour before making this move. He refrained from immediate actions against the white pawn centre and finished off his development.

10.♗d3 ♘b6 11.♙c2 ♘c4.



Diagram 44

This manoeuvre is typical for Petrosian. The knight is heading for d6, the square that it is going to control the important “e4” point from. Meanwhile the opponent has the option to either capture the knight or displace it. **12.♙ff1.** As S. Flohr wrote about this moment, he won a bet from A. Kotov for a

rouble. Kotov thought that Botvinnik would play 12.♘g5. A lot of other commentators anticipated the same move with the idea to answer 12...♗d7 with 13.e4. A. O’Kelly recommended for Black 13...h6 14.♘f3 ♗e6 with mutual chances. I think that White is slightly better though: 15.e5 ♘d7 16.♗g3 with the idea ♘c3–e2–f4. Instead of 14...♗e6 it seems much more logical to play 14...de 15.♘:e4 ♘:e4 16.♗:c4 ♘d6 17.♗b3 0-0 and Black has a good position. Another recommendation is 12.♗:c4 dc 13.e4 with the intention to castle queen side.

Black has nothing to fear from here, on the contrary, after 13...b5 he can grab the initiative.

12...d6 The ideal square for the knight **13.d2**. 13.g5 was still possible with the idea to answer 13...d7 with 14.e:h7 (14...e:h7 15.f:h7 g6 16.f:d6 f:d6 17.f:g6). Therefore 13...c8 is much better. I think that the best way to meet the requirements of the position is 13.e5!. The knight is placed perfectly in the centre and White has good chances to exploit the space advantage.

13...c8. A mysterious move. Black created the threat 13...h5, but the next move neutralizes this. Now, the following question arises: is the queen move useful? Actions like that are somehow typical for Petrosian. He wants to emphasize that to restrict the scope of choice for his opponent is his main task. **14.g2 d7** The knight manoeuvres continue.

15.f3 g6



Diagram 45

16.Bac1. This move was condemned by a lot of commentators who thought that it was high time White played 16.e4. Only P. H. Clarke in his "Biography of Petrosian" and H. Knoch in "Chess Review" considered this move to be the right one. Knoch thought that after 16.e4 de 17.fe b6 the

white centre would not be easy to hold, so Black after castling queen side would start the counter offence. I think that the recommendation of these two authors is mistaken irrelevant of which side Black castles on. The opportunity for White to play e3-e4 does not necessarily means that White has the initiative, since it is not easy to tell whether White's centre is strong or weak. **16...b6 17.b3**. White had to

consider 17.e4 again, but on this move it was even more unclear than on the previous one. **17...♖d7 18.♗e2**. B. Rabar in the magazine "Shahovski Glasnik" gave a wrong evaluation of this continuation. The strategical plan of Botvinnik to place the knight on f4 was completely within the requirements of the position. **18...♗dc8**.



Diagram 46

The opponents play as if they don't pay attention to each other. That is the impression, like each one has completely forgotten about the other one." Golombek mentioned in the "British Chess Magazine". This does not mean at all that the tension in the game diminished. Black is regrouping with the idea to neutralize the White's activity on the king side. **19.a4?** This impulsive move was criticized by everybody. I considered it to be the main cause of White's future difficulties. White intended to develop some initiative in the centre and on the king side, and his wish to blockade the queen side was entirely understandable. The pawn advance e3–e4 however, can endanger the "b3" pawn. **19...a5**.



Diagram 47

"A very peculiar moment of the game" – Golombek wrote. "The opponents finally realized that they were playing against each other. " **20.♗g3 ♗d6 21.♗f4 ♗e7**

You can hardly ever imagine, if you don't know the previous

course of the game, that the knight on e7 is the queen's knight and the knight on b6 is the king's knight. **22. ♖f1**. White is also manoeuvring with the knights considering the "e" pawn move dubious. In this case however according to Clarke's analysis Black can afford to play sharply: **22... ♗:f4 23. ♗:f4 de 24. ♘:e4 ♙:d4 25. ♘d6+ ♔d7**.

22...h5. A very interesting moment. White failed to seize the initiative after the aggressive 7th move. Petrosian finally decides, it is high time he neutralized opponent's space advantage completely. **23. ♗e2 h4** (In harmony with the plan) **24. ♗h2**. R. Wade recommended **24. ♗e1** in the "World Chess Championship". It is possible Botvinnik was afraid of **24... ♗:f4 25. ef ♙c7 26. ♗d2 ♘d7** with the positional threat **27... ♘f8** and next **28... ♗d7** and **29... ♘e6**. Despite the minor weaknesses on the dark squares, Petrosian was still keeping the advantage. **24...g5** – increasing the space advantage.



Diagram 48

25. ♘d3. I am sure that Botvinnik didn't consider **25. ♘h5** to be a serious alternative, since his spent on this move only a minute. I thought **25... ♗h6!**, as best after **25. ♘h5**. But not **25... ♘g8** as most of the commentators suggested. White would have a serious initiative after **26. ♗:d6**

♙:d6 27. f4 (The point was that **27... f6** was bad because of **28. fg fg 29. ♙g6+** winning material.) **25... ♙c7 26. ♙d2**. Presently White can not achieve anything substantial. This variation proves the true merits of the Black position. Black can afford castling on either side at any moment.

26... ♘d7 27. ♗g1. This strange retreat was criticized fairly by everybody. With his next move Botvinnik is going back with

the bishop. **27...♖g6**. A very good move, but 27...f5 was also good as L. Szabo and M. Tal pointed out.

28.♗h2 ♜e7. Petrosian repeats the moves missing once again the chance to start a deadly offence on the king side with 28...f5, i.e. 29.♗:d6 ♜:d6 30.♞c3 0-0! Indeed, temporarily Black can not increase the pressure since the pawn advance f5–f4 is impossible. Despite that however, White is doomed to passively wait till his position dissipates to pieces. Hesitations were so typical for Petrosian. Plenty of times he achieved a decisive advantage and then he missed the winning line. **29.♗d1** Botvinnik decided to make a try to free himself with the pawn advance e3–e4, since he didn't have anything else to do. **29...b6 30.♝g1 f6**. Black is protecting the "g" pawn. 30...f5 was also possible to play, although weaker since White could organize the resistance by means of 31.♗:d6 ♜:d6 32.♞h2 with a good position.



Diagram 49

31.e4 Finally! White's centre does not possess enough offensive strength, but still it hampers the pawn advances c6–c5 and f6–f5. **31...♗:h2+** **32.♞:h2**. Botvinnik was hardly in doubt, whether to exchange queens or not, since his king was seriously endangered. The text move was criticized by

almost all the commentators (Clarke being the nice exception). "Unbelievable" – Flohr exclaimed – "White decided to risk and attack, and suddenly by playing e4, he was exchanging queens." Then he sighed and continued "... Utterly amazing." A lot of other commentators were at a loss, although there was not a single moment in the game, at which White could hope for an attack. Now, twenty years later it is

evident that the importance of the central pawns was clearly exaggerated. **32... ♖:h2+** **33. ♙:h2 ♖d8** **34. ♗f2** (34. ♖d2 was much better with 35. ♗f2 next.) **34... ♗f7**. Flohr thought that Petrosian didn't play precisely so he should have won a tempo by means of 34...0-0. This was a very amusing misunderstanding. The reader can see for himself that after two moves you can have the same position on the board that you can have after castling. **35. ♗e3 ♖he8** **36. ♖d2 ♗g7** **37. ♗f2**. You can have a look at the comments to move 24 of White. White's king on "e3" is not safe enough. **37... de**.



Diagram 50

Black is reducing the tension in the centre before he occupies the "f8" square with the knight. **37... ♖f8** could be followed by **38.e5**. **38. fe ♖f8** **39. ♖e1**. An excellent defensive move. The knight is on the road to "g2", where it is going to control the weakness on "f4" from. **39... ♖fg6**.

Petrosian had only two minutes left for his last two moves, so this can be the only explanation why he missed the strongest continuation. **39... ♗f7!** put his opponent in real

trouble with the idea to put the bishop on "g6" and the knight on "e6" exerting maximum pressure on White's central hanging pawns. **40. ♖g2 ♖d7**.



Diagram 51

The game was adjourned here. Black has a little but stable positional advantage, since the white pawns on "b3" and "h3" are in constant need of

defending. It is amazing though, that most of the famous grandmasters at that time were thinking otherwise. Bronstein, Tal, Flohr and even Botvinnik thought that White was slightly better. It is possible that the reason for this evaluation (I discussed that in the comments to move 32) was the overestimation of the strength of the central pawns. I am convinced that nowadays both Bronstein and Tal would not hesitate to evaluate the position as advantageous for Black.

Petrosian and his second I. Boleslavsky thought that Black had a small advantage and the challenger planned to offer a draw. Boleslavsky managed to dissuade him and said that Botvinnik had been very tired: "...You just play on, you might win." His prognosis proved right. **41.♗c2**. The sealed move, over which Botvinnik thought for about 15 minutes. 41.♗h2 is definitely weaker because of 41...♞ed8 42.♖f3 ♖e5! 43.♖ge1 ♖:f3 44.♖:f3 c5 45.d5 ♖g6 46.♗e2 ♗f7, followed by 47...♖f4 and a decisive advantage for Black. **41...♗f7 42.♖fe3**. Botvinnik said after the game that this was an impulsive move and said that he should have played 22.♞cd1. I can not accept such an explanation for a mistake. The loss of attention or shock points out towards an amazing lack of concentration and selfdiscipline. Besides that, I can believe anything except that Botvinnik didn't analyse well the adjourned position. Yet, it is worth remembering that the world champion did not have a second, while Petrosian had... The move 42.♞cd1 was essential, with the idea to 42...♞ed8 to respond 43.♖fe3 i.e. 43...c5 44.d5 ♖e5 45.♖c4 ♖:c4 46.bc ♖g6 47.♗d3 ♖e5 58.♗f1 ♗g6 49.♞e1 and White has defended the "e" pawn safely. **42...c5!** (Under the circumstances this is extremely strong) **43.d5 ♖e5**



Diagram 52

44. Bf1? The beginning of a very unsatisfactory plan. White would like to organize some pressure on the "f6" pawn, but that only enables the opponent to place his pieces on the optimal squares. The only chance was 44. Qc4 Q:c4 45. bc and next:

A) 45... Ag6 46. Qe3 Qc8 47. e5! (but not 47. Qf5?, as was suggested by I. Kan in the "Shakhmati in USSR" No. 8, 1963, because after 47... Af5 48. ef. The White's position is as hopeless as in the game. In case of 47... B:e5 48. Af5! Black has to allow either the enemy knight to enjoy the "f5" square, or to comply with the exchange of his strong knight for the "bad" enemy bishop.

B) 45... Qc8. All the commentators here recommended the pawn sacrifice 46. e5 B:e5 47. Af5. After 47... Bd8 48. A:c8 B:c8 49. Bb1 White would have excellent counterchances. He got rid of the "bad" bishop, and the Black "b" pawn remained defenceless. Therefore it would be better 47... Ae6 but after 48. Qe3 White has, similar to variation A), excellent chances for a draw. The text move is most probably the decisive mistake.

44... Ag6 45. Qe1 Qc8. The second knight is on the way to the ideal blocking square "d6".

46. Bdf2 Bf7 47. Qd2. The special reporter of "Volkskrant" thought this to be the decisive mistake. 47. Be2 was possible and after 47... Qd6 48. Qd1 b5! White had some chances for a draw. In the game, however White lost this small hope.

47... Qd6.



Diagram 53

desperate situations. In this case, however the technical difficulties for Black are minimal. 50...♖fe7, then 51...♘f7 and 52...♙d6. 49...c4. Petrosian thought for about 10 minutes and decided that it was time to open a second front on the queen side. 50.♖b1 b5! Petrosian grabs the initiative and goes forward. The positional threat is 51...b4, after which the protected passed pawn will automatically bring Black the victory. 51.b4 White's only chance, but now comes another blow:



Diagram 54

of the situation. 56.♖a2 ab 57.ab ♘:b5 58.♖a6 ♘c3+ 59.♙c1 ♘:d5. So, Black has an extra pawn and a better position. 60.♙a4 ♖ec8 (with the threat of a discovered check.) 61.♙e1 ♘f4.

Black obtained the ideal, the dream position. 48.♙f5+. A sad necessity but that was the only way to avoid the loss of a pawn. 48...♙:f5 49.ef. Bronstein recommended here to sacrifice the exchange – 49.♖:f5 ♘:f5 50.♖:f5 as the only chance to put up some resistance. You need desperate sacrifices in

51...c3+! Sacrificing this pawn, Black is not only opening the "c" file, but he secures the "c4" square for one of the knights. 52.♙:c3 ♖c7+ 53.♙d2 ♘ec4+ 54.♙d1 ♘a3 55.♖b2. In the variation 55.♖b3 ♘:c2 56.♖:c2 ♖:c2 57.♙:c2 ♖e2+ White loses a piece. 55...♘ac4

The Black knights are masters



Diagram 55

White resigned.

The final position is in fact symbolic for the whole game. The position of the black knights is superb. The win comes after twenty four knight-manoeuvers. Botvinnik's resistance was practically crushed after this struggle. The score became 10 to 8, and then Petrosian won

game 19 and after three more draws became the new World Champion."

Pawn structures like the "Karlsbad" one can arise from a lot of other openings, sometimes with the colors reversed. Robert Fischer was White in the Caro-Kann defence in the "Match of the Century", between USSR and the rest of the world. He utilized Black's opportunities (when Black manages with colors reversed in the Karlsbad variation to occupy the "b1-h7" diagonal) in his game with Petrosian in Belgrade 1970.

After the moves **1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.ed cd 4.♘d3 ♘c6 5.c3 ♘f6 6.♘f4** – the Karlsbad pawn structure has been reached with the bishop pair of White having occupied the key diagonals "h2 – b8" and "b1 – h7". The reader can effortlessly find this game in a lot of books. I would like to emphasize the similarity of strategical ideas in plenty of positions.

We have finally to look over some cases when Black is trying after **1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.cd ed 5.♘g5** to avoid somehow playing **c7-c6**. **A. Beliavsky** tried to follow such a strategy in his candidates-match against **Kasparov** in 1983. The opening of the first game was played accordingly: **1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 d5 4.cd ed 5.♘g5 ♘e7 6.e3 h6 7.♘h4 0-0 8.♘d3 b6 9.♘f3 ♘b7 10.0-0 c5 11.♘e5 ♘c6?**



Diagram 56

Kasparov found a nice tactical stroke **12. ♖a6!**. The rest was practically forced: **12... ♖c8 13. ♖:b7 ♖:b7 14. ♖:f6 ♖:f6 15. ♜g4 ♜d8 16. ♜:d5 ♜:d4 17. ♜df6+ ♖:f6 18. ♜:f6+ gf 19. ed cd 20. ♖:d4 ♜g7** and now with the move

21. ♖ad1!, instead of **21. ♖ac1**

White could have set problems to his opponent, that would be insurmountable. The game ended in a draw.

The third game was rather short: **11... ♜bd7** (instead of **11... ♜c6?**) **12. ♖f3 cd 13. ed ♜:e5 14. de ♜d7 15. ♖:e7 ♖:e7 16. ♜:d5 ♖:e5 17. ♜e7+ ♜h8! 18. ♖:b7 ♜c5 19. ♖f3 ♜:d3 20. ♜c6 ♖e6 21. b3 ♜e5 22. ♜:e5 ♖e5 23. ♖ae1 ♖c7 24. ♖c1 ♖e7** Draw. The imprecise move **12. ♖f3?!** allowed Black to easily equalize. The right way to meet Black's defensive scheme was demonstrated by the future world champion in game 5: **12. ♖f5!** (The first 11 moves were repeated, just as in game 3.)



Diagram 57

White prevented the standard simplification **12... ♜:e5 13. de ♜e4**, after which **14. ♜:d5!** wins a pawn in all the lines. Black's problems do not decrease after **12... cd**. After **13. ♜:d7! ♜:d7 14. ♖:e7 ♖:e7 15. ♖:d4** White obtains a very favourable position against the enemy isolated pawn. Beliavskii chose

12...♖e5 13.de ♘e8, but after 14.♙g3 ♘c7 15.♖g4 ♖e8
 16.♙d7 ♖d8 17.♗ad1 Kasparov won a beautiful game. The
 reader will find it easy to locate this game in different chess
 books and magazines. Finally, the 7th game also ended in a
 quick draw. Beliavsky played differently on move 10:
 10...♘e4, instead of 10...c5. The game continued.
 11.♙:e7 ♖:e7 12.♘e5 ♘d7 13.f4 ♘:e5 14.fe c5
 15.♖e1! ♗ad8 16.♗d1! ♖g5?! 17.♗f3?! f6 18.ef cd!
 19.ed ♗de8! 20.♙b5! ♗d8!! 21.♙d3 ♗de8 Draw.

I will give the comments of Kasparov to the opening stage
 of this game, from his book "Through the Test of Time"
 ("Izpitanie Vremenem").

"The natural move 12.♘e5 is not even mentioned in the
 opening monographs, which recommends only 12.♖b3. Black
 will liquidate the knight on "e5" (It would be too dangerous to
 put up with it i.e. 13...♘df6?! 14.♘:e4 de 15 ♙c4 ♘d5
 16.♙:d5! ♙:d5 17.f5 with a very strong attack). It might seem
 that Black has solved the opening problems, but the two
 consecutive consolidating moves 15.♖e1! and 16.♗d1!
 demonstrate that is far from true. The only logical play for
 Black, connected with f7–f6, leads by force after 17.♙:e4! de 18.ef
 ♗:f6 19.♗:f6 ♖:f6 20.dc bc 21.♗:d8+ ♖:d8 22.♘a4 to an endgame, in
 which Black has to fight stubbornly for a draw. That was not suitable to
 Beliavsky's taste, accordingly he decided to keep up the
 tension with the help of a risky queen manoeuvre.

The easiest way to prove the futility of this was 17.♖e2,
 after which Black should sooner or later comply to play the
 endgame that he was so desperately trying to avoid. Besides
 that, 17.h4!? ♖h5 18.♘e2! was emphasizing the unstable
 position of the queen. I was thinking during the game that
 17.♗f3 keeps all the advantages of the position, but several
 brilliant moves in a row, found by Beliavsky, allowed him to
 avoid the immediate danger."

Finally, the situation when White develops the knight on "e2" and Black manages without the move c7 – c6 arose in the game Gulko – Chiburdanidze, Frunze 1985.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.cd ed 5.♗g5 ♗e7 6.e3 0-0 7.♗d3 ♘bd7 8.♘ge2 b6 9.♘g3 g6 10.h4 c5. In case of 10...h5 11.♙c2 ♘g7 White obtained an advantage by playing 12.♘ge2 and ♘f4 next.

11.♙c2.11.h5? is a mistake because of 11...cd 12.ed ♘:h5.

11...♗e8 12.0-0-0 c4?! 13.♗e2 a6 14.♗f3 ♗b7 15.h5 ♘e4. If 15...b5, then 16.hg hg 17.a3! with an advantage for White.



Diagram 58

It looks like Black has solved the opening problems successfully. The exchanges 16.♗:e4 de 17.♗:e7 ♙:e7 18.hg hg lead to approximately equal position. Black can neutralize the White rook on the "h" file with 19...♘g7 and ♗h8 next, and equalize. White found another plan:

16.hg! hg. Grandmaster Gulko annotated this game in the "Chess Informant" 40 and said that 16...♘:g5 was losing because of 17.gf+ ♘:f7 18.♗:h7+ ♘:h7 19.♙:h7+ ♘e6 20.♙f5+ ♘d6 21 ♙f4+, and in case of 16...♗:g5 17.gf+ ♘:f7 18.♗:h7+ ♘g8 White was winning with 19.♘:c:e4 de 20.♙:c4+ ♘:h7 21.♙f7+ ♘h8 22.♗h1+ ♗h4 23.♘f5.

17.♗:e4 de 18.♗f4! This move was the idea behind the pawn exchange. It is not good for Black now to play 18...g5, at least because of 19.♗e5 ♗6 20.♘g:e4 fe 21.♘d6.

18...♗c8 19.♘g:e4 ♘f8 20.g4. White won a pawn and continues the attack. 21.g5 is the threat.

20...g5 21.♔e5 f6 22.f4! ♕:e4 23.♖:e4 fe 24.de? White could have determined the fate of this game quickly by means of a king side attack playing 24.fe and then 25.♖h2 and ♔df1.

24...♗d3!! A fantastic tactical counterchance. **25.♗h2 ♗:e3+ 26.♔d2 c3?** The world champion failed to make good of the lucky chance. Playing 26...♗:f4! 27.♗h8+ ♖f7 28.e6+ ♖:e6 29.♔h7+ ♖g6 30.♔h6+ ♖f7 31.♗h7+ ♖g7 (31...♖f8 32.♔g6) 32.♗g6+ ♖g8 33.♔h7 ♔f8! 34.♖g5 ♗:d2+ !! and Black was out of danger for example 35.♖:d2 ♔cd8+ 36.♖c3 ♔e3+ with a draw by perpetual since 37.♖:c4 ?? was impossible because of 37...b5 #. (Gulko) Now comes an immediate crush

27.♗h8+ ♖f7 28.e6+! ♖:e6 29.♗g8! mate.

The Queen's Gambit Accepted.

I have worked a lot with young players and I can say that this opening is played in junior competitions rather rarely. After the moves 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dc the most popular continuations are the aggressive 3.e4; 4.♖c3, and the tricky 3.e3. I think however, that the young player should first of all learn to play the classical positions with an isolated pawn and mainly he must get acquainted with M. Botvinnik's games. Studying the classics is an integral part in the development of the young chess player. We are going still to make ourselves an exemplary program of studying the best chess player's games. I have to admit that Botvinnik's games are so many that I have never offered anybody of my students to study them as a whole. First of all you can never do that and second the play of the 6th world champion was typical with a discipline of thinking, impressive planning of all actions and a great desire to win, but he lacked the artistic easiness of

achievement of Capablanca and Smyslov. Botvinnik left us a huge chess legacy but I saw that it would be very difficult for the young player to work on it move by move. The chess player can do that really after he becomes a strong master but at first it would be more useful for him to study the play of Botvinnik in the openings. His analytical approach to chess and the development of the strategical schemes, which go from the opening deeply into the middle game were something like a clairvoyance at the time and let many other players understand the chess problems more profoundly. Now most of his systems are basic and the contemporary theory is set firmly upon them on the road of development. We have seen already in the Karlsbad variation that Botvinnik's ideas appeared and were modernized in other player's games. Botvinnik's schemes have always been oriented towards deep and subtle strategical struggle. They lead to complicated positions and give a wide scope to grab and lead the initiative on a sound positional basis.

Botvinnik made a heavy contribution to the theory of the Queen's Gambit Accepted, not less than in the Karlsbad system, although in his match for the world championship in 1963 with Petrosian he hardly managed to level the score in this opening. It's quite probable that the way he treated this opening, mainly with 7.a4 was somehow outdated. If we make a supposition that this system becomes once again the object of serious theoretical discussions, we can be sure that the powerful analytical brigades of the world champion and the challenger are going to develop this system thoroughly. We want however to teach the young player to play well, and we are not preparing him to candidates –matches, besides the Queen's Gambit Accepted, from the stage of the first degree to the master's title, is not the most popular opening. Therefore the study and the application of Botvinnik's methods in the first stages is both sensible and rational.

Afterwards when the chess player starts on the road to the great chess arena, he's going to choose his own schemes. Before we start to study the classical "isolated pawn" we have to spend some time upon the systems in which black's bishop goes to g4. So **1.d4 d5 2.c4 dc 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.e3 ♗g4 5.♗:c4 e6 6.h3 ♗h5 7.♘c3!**



Diagram 59

The pawn structure allows the application of different plans. White has definite advantage in the centre and intends in some suitable moment, after some preparation, to play e3 – e4. Black should be ready to meet the opponent in the centre with the move e6 – e5. He has to

decide right now where to develop the knight from b8? To play 7...♘d7, but 8.♗b5! is rather unpleasant. Because of that, in order to develop the knight on c6, the preparatory move **7...a6** should be played first. But then White gets some advantage in the development, which he can make good use of with **8.g4! ♗g6 9.♘e5** (threatening 10.h4) **9...♘bd7 10.♘:g6 hg 11.g5 ♘d5**. There is nothing better. In case of 11...♘h5 12.h4, or 11...♘h7 12.f4 and black knight remains isolated for a long time. **12.♘:d5 ed 13.♗:d5 c6 14.♗c4!**? I remember that some time long ago, grandmaster Boleslavsky showed this move to me. **14...♗:g5 15.♗b3 0-0-0 16.♗:f7 ♗g2 17.♗f1 ♗:h3 18.♗d2**



Diagram 60

White has the advantage of the two bishops and a better pawn structure. Black has to fight for a draw. I have to mention that 18...♖:f1? loses immediately after 19.♔f1 ♖h1+ 20.♗e2 ♖:a1 21.♙a5!

The move 7...♘d7 looks much more solid than 7...a6. Lets continue our analysis:

8.0-0 ♗d6 9.e4. 9.♙e2 seems very good, but Black has the additional opportunity 9...♙g6. **9...e5 10.♙e2 ♗:f3** In case of 10...0-0 11.de ♘:e5 12.♘:e5 ♙:e2 13.♘:f7!? ♙h2+ 14.♗:h2 ♖:d1 15.♖:d1 ♙:d1 16.♘g5 White has excellent compensation for the exchange – a pawn and a strong initiative. **11.♙:f3 0-0.** This position (possibly with some transposition) arose in the game Didishko – Mariasin, Minsk 1980. The game went on **12.♙g5! ed 13.♖:d4 ♘e5** This looks like a serious achievement. The white bishop can not retreat 14.♙e2 ??, since White loses the queen 14...♘f3+ !. But the next move of Didishko forces Black to fight for a draw in a very difficult endgame. **14.♖ad1!** The positional threat 15.♙e2 is very unpleasant for Black and the exchange 15...♘:f3+ 16.gf does not improve his position because of the threats 17.e5 or 17.♘d5. Mariasin couldn't find anything better than: **14...h6 15.♙h4 g5 16.♙g3 ♘:f3+ 17.gf ♙:g3 18.fg ♖:d4+ 19.♖:d4 ♖fd8 20.♖fd1 ♖:d4 21.♖:d4**



Diagram 61

I have worked on endgames like that in a special chapter "Pawn Advantage on the Side" in my book "Endgame Strategy". White has occupied totally the "d" file and has the opportunity to push forward the king side pawns. Black has nothing against this plan. The game continued: **21...Ee8 22.♟f2 Ee6**

23.f4 Eb6 24.Ed2 gf 25.gf Eb4 26.♟e3 ♟f8 27.b3 c6 28.Ed8+ ♟e7 29.Eh8 a5 30.E:h6 a4 31.ba ♞d7 32.Eh5 ♞b6 33.a5 ♞a4 34.♞e2 Eb2 35.♞d4 E:a2 36.♞f5+ ♟d7 37.Eh7 ♟e6 38.Eh6+ ♟d7 39.Ef6 Ea3+ 40.♟d4 ♞b2 and Black resigned, since **41.E:f7+** comes next.

We are going to study now the games of the match in 1963, Botvinnik – Petrosian. In the second game of the match, when the score was 1:0 in Botvinnik's favour, the opening was played like this: **1.d4 d5 2.c4 dc 3.♞f3 ♞f6 4.e3 c5 5.♟:c4 e6 6.0-0 a6 7.a4**. At the beginning of his chess career Botvinnik was trying to avoid this move. After that, starting with the game against V. Alatorztev, the opening of which will be part of the comments to the next game, world champion №. 6 turned to the Queen's rook pawn move on the 7th move. If we have a look at his results, all his really important games in this variation i.e. with Keres 1941, with Euwe 1946 and the match – games with Petrosian, ended in a draw. We are going to see now, however what it cost Petrosian, one of the greatest masters of defence in the history of chess, being in his prime, to manage to defend Black's position.

7...♞c6 8.♟e2 cd 9.Ed1 ♞e7 10.ed 0-0 11.♟g5! In his later games Botvinnik preferred the immediate development

of the knight – 11.♖c3. **11...♗d5.** In case of 11...b6?! rather unpleasant will be 12.♙:f6! ♙:f6 13.d5. Petrosian tries to simplify and allows a not too obvious, but very dangerous development of his opponent's pieces. If 11...♗b4, White might continue 12.♖c3 and we could have the position from game 10, we are going to deal with later.

12.♙e7 ♗c:e7 13.♗e5 ♙d7



Diagram 62

14.♗d2! The idea behind Botvinnik's play is transparent now. After the exchange of the dark square bishops, the "a3" square will be available for the white rook and it will use the third rank for the attack on the king side.

14...♙c6 15.♗e4 ♗f4 16.♙f3 ♙:e4 17.♙:e4 ♗fd5 18.♙a3!

♙c8 19.♙h3! ♗g6 20.♙:d5. The first fruits of White's active strategy are already ripe. Instead of the isolated pawn, two isolated pawns appeared on the board with the white pieces having the much better disposition.

20...ed. Petrosian does not agree to play the difficult endgame after 20...♙:d5 21.♙:d5 ed 22.♗d7 ♙fe8 23.♙b3 ♙c7 24.♗c5, and prefers to defend the position with the queens on. **21.♙f5 ♙d6** (22.♙h5 was the threat) **22.♙b3.** 22.♗:f7 would be a blunder because of 22...♙f4. **22...♙c7 23.g3 b6 24.♙e1 ♗e7 25.♙f4 ♙c2.** White is easily rejecting Blacks onslaught offering to exchange the queens meanwhile. **26.♗d3! ♙d8** Black is losing a pawn in the endgame. **27.♙g5!** White's pressure increases. Black's defence is very difficult. **27...♗c8!** If 27...f6? 28.♙e3 Black's position is hardly defensible.



Diagram 63

28. ♖:d8? This move was evidently based on a misjudgement. After 28. ♖e5! the position would have been somehow similar to the world-famous game Botvinnik – Alekhine from the “AVRO” tournament 1938. White would have been keeping the strong pressure. Now however the

game simplifies into a draw. **28... ♜:d8 29. a5 ba 30. ♜b8 ♜f8! 31. ♜a1 ♜e7 32. ♜:f8+ ♜:f8 33. ♜:a5 ♜d2 34. ♜:a6 ♜:d3 35. ♜a8+ ♜c8.** The opponents agreed to a draw in this position. Black is recapturing the “d4” pawn and there is no sense in continuing the fight.

In game 10 of the match Botvinnik abstained from 11. ♗g5 although the outcome of the opening in the second game was favourable for White. So **11. ♜c3.** Petrosian answered **11... ♜b4.** In his game with V. Alatortzev, Leningrad 1932 Botvinnik played in this position 12. ♜e5. After 12... ♜bd5 13. ♗g5 h6 14. ♗h4 ♗d7!? 15. ♜:d5 ♜:d5 16. ♗e7 (16. ♗:d5 ed 17. ♜:d7 ♜e8!! 18. ♗:e7 ♖:d7 19. ♜e1 ♜ac8! 20. ♖f3 ♜:e7 21. ♜:e7 ♖:e7 22. ♖:d5 ♜c2 23. ♖b3 ♖e4 and Botvinnik said that the most probable outcome would be a draw.) 16... ♖:e7 (16... ♜:e7? 17. d5!) 17. ♜g6 fg 18. ♗:d5 and White managed to get some better position and subsequently won. Master V. Chekhover suggested for Black 12... ♗d7! Now, White doesn't have anything after 13. d5 ed 14. ♜:d5 ♜b:d5 15. ♗:d5 ♜:d5 16. ♜:d5 because of 16... ♗g4! 17. ♖c4 ♖:d5 !! 18. ♖:d5 ♜ad8. Black is using tactical means to pass through the most dangerous moment – the manoeuvre of the bishop from “c8” via “d7” to “c6” and is out of serious trouble. It is highly probable that Petrosian calculated all this line but Botvinnik made some connections with: **12. ♗g5!? ♗d7** “It is amazing

but this move loses a pawn. It would be hardly necessary to tell the reader that all this line was prepared by me before the game. Nevertheless, I made my next move not without some hesitation because I anticipated that it would not be easy to win with an extra pawn". – (Botvinnik) **13.d5**



Diagram 64

13...ed 14.♖:d5 ♜b:d5. If
 14...♜f:d5 then 15.♙:e7 ♜:e7
 16.♜e5 ♜bd5 17.♙:d5 ♜:d5
 18.♞:d5 and Black wouldn't
 have Chekhover's manoeuvre
 18...♙g4 19.♚c4 ♚:d5 since
 the first rank is controlled by the
 white rook. **15.♙:d5 ♜:d5**
16.♞:d5 ♙:g5 17.♜:g5 h6.
 18.♚d3 was the threat. **18.♚d2**

hg 19.♞:d7 ♚f6 If 19...♚b6 20.a5 ♚b3, then 21.♞a3 and
 White still wins a pawn. **20.♞:b7 ♞ad8 21.♚a5 ♞d6 22.♚b4**
♞fd8 23.♞f1 ♞d4 24.♚b3 ♞d3 25.♚c2 ♞d2 26.♚c7 ♚f4
27.♚:f4 gf 28.h4 ♞c8 29.♞b4 f3 30.gf ♞8c2 31.b3 ♞b2
32.♙g2 ♞d3 33.♞b8+ ♙h7 34.♞b7 f6 35.♞e1 ♞d:b3 36.♞:b3
♞:b3 37.♞e6 ♞b4 38.♞:a6 ♞:h4 39.♙g3 g5 40.♙g2 ♙g6
41.♞a8 ♞f4 42.a5 ♞a4 43.a6 Draw. Petrosian managed to
 save this game, but to "exercise" yourself to defend a position
 with the pawn down right after the opening is not a very
 pleasant task. Most probably White can find an improvement.
 Even at the end, playing 36.♞a7 instead of 36.♞:b3 White can
 create much more serious problems for the opponent after
 36...♞b4 37.♞ee7 ♞:a4 38.♞:g7+. Anyway, in his next game in
 the Queen's Gambit Accepted, Petrosian avoided the
 repetition. I have still to add that, if Black plays 12...♜fd5!?,
 instead of 12...♙d7 White can keep some pressure after
 13.♜:d5 ♜:d5 14.♙:e7 ♜:e7 15.♚e4 ♜d5 16.♙:d5 or
 16.♜e5.

Game 16 of the match – 11...d5.

Evidently, the strongest move. Black impedes ♗g5. 12.♗d3 Botvinnik tries to emphasize the negative sides of the knight manoeuvre in the centre and starts to apply some piece pressure on the king side. 12...♖cb4 13.♗b1 ♗d7?!. Nowadays, Black prefers to develop the bishop on "b7" with the help of the move 13...b6. In a game of the Interzonal tournament in Rio de Janeiro 1979, Petrosian played against Portisch 14.♗e4 g6 15.♗h6 ♗e8 16.♗e5 but didn't have anything substantial. After 16...♗f8 17.♗:f8 ♗:f8 18.♖e4 ♖c6 19.♗g3 ♖ce7 20.♖d6 the opponents agreed to a draw. P. Nikolic in his game against Petrosian in Vrbas 1981, played with White 16.♖e5, instead of 16.♗e5. Black had no opening problems in this game as well, playing 16...♗b7 17.♗f3 f5 18.♗g3 ♗h4 19.♗h3 ♗c8. Instead of 14.♗e4 White has also tried the moves 14.♖e5 and 14.a5. Some players play 12.♗e4 before ♗d3. Most often a very complicated fight arises with approximately equal chances in which Black often solves the problem of defence on the king side by means of f7 – f5.

Lets go back to the game Botvinnik – Petrosian.



Diagram 65

14.♗e4 g6 15.♖e5 ♗f6
 16.♗f3! ♗g7 17.♗g3 ♗e8
 18.h4 ♖c6 19.♖f3! Wonderfully played. White does not allow any simplification and the lack of coordination between his pieces on the queen side is just an optical illusion. The white long-range bishops are exerting tremendous pressure on the

king side of the opponent, which is going to be increased even more when the "h" pawn goes forward. As for the

collaboration between the white rooks, presently this is not a matter of vital importance. **19...f6**. If Petrosian, who was extremely capable to evaluate chess positions properly, made such a move in order to prevent the eventual attack of the opponent, then Black had hardly a good position. **20.♖:d5 ed**. Bad is **20...♗:d5 21.♙a2 21.h5 ♖e7 22.hg?!** The outcome of this game was terribly important for both opponents. In game 14 Botvinnik levelled the score but right after that, in the very next game Petrosian won again. The win in this game we are following, could still have given Botvinnik the psychological and sportive advantage. Having outplayed the opponent in the opening stage, White starts to play unsatisfactorily. Naturally, the tremendous nervous tension and the physical tiredness was asserting itself. There was no need to exchange on "g6". It only gave Black the opportunity to coordinate his pieces. **22...♙:g6 23.♖h4 ♙:b1 24.♖:b1 ♗d7 25.b3 ♖f7** Black prepares further simplification with the move **25...♖f5. 26.♗f3 f5 27.♗g3 ♖c6 28.♖f3 ♖e7 29.♙f4 ♖e4 30.♖e5 ♖:e5 31.de ♖ae8 32.f3 ♖e2 33.♖e1 ♖a2?!** A very risky decision. **33...♖:e1+** was much safer **34.♙g5?!** Black would have had a very difficult position after **34.♖bc1!** threatening **35.e6 ♖:e6 36.♖c7**. The difficulties that Black must face are illustrated by the following variation: **34.♖bc1 ♖e6 35.♙g5 ♖g6 36.e6! ♖:e6 37.♙f6! ♖:f6 38.♖c7 f4 39.♖e8+ ♖f8 40.♖:f8+ ♗f8 41.♗:f4+. 34...d4 35.♙f6 (35.♖bd1 was better)**



Diagram 66

35... ♗f7 36.♖bd1 ♗g6 37.♗:g6 hg 38.♙:g7 ♖:g7

39.e6? This loss of time is difficult to explain. Playing **39.♖:d4 ♖c8 40.♗h2 ♖cc2 41.♖g1** White was keeping the extra pawn and excellent chances to win. **39...♖c8 40.♗h2?!** **40.e7** was leading to

an immediate draw. **40...♖cc2 41.♖g1?** Now, White will have to fight for a draw, which was achieved easily with **41.e7. 41...♗d2 42.♗de1 ♘f8 43.e7+ ♘e8 44.♙g3 d3 45.♗e3!** Only move. **45...♗ab2 46.♙f4 ♗:g2 47.♗d1 ♗bd2 48.♗:d2 ♗:d2 49.♙g5 ♗d1 50.♙f6 f4 51.♗e4 ♗c1 52.♗d4 ♗c6+ 53.♙g5 ♗c3 54.♙f6** Draw.

I have to mention that during the course of the match Petrosian persistently tried to avoid positions with an isolated pawn, so he played in game 6 – **8...♗e7**. Next: **9.dc ♗:c5 10.e4 ♘g4** and White abstained from the move **11.e5** because of **11...♗d4**. After **11.♗f4 ♗f6 12.♗g3 ♘ge5 13.♗:e5 ♗:e5** the game ended in a draw on the 27th move. In the next game, however Botvinnik had been excellently prepared against his opponent's plan.



Diagram 67

The first ten moves were the same as in game 6, and then Botvinnik played boldly **11.e5! ♗d4 12.♗:d4 ♗:d4 13.♗a3! ♗:a3** – the only move. It wouldn't be advisable to snatch the "e5" pawn i. e. **13...♗:e5 14.♗e3 ♗d6 15.♗fd1 ♗e7 16.♗:c5 ♗:c5 17.♗b5+! ab 18.♗ac1. 14.♗:a3 ♗:e5 15.b3.**

You can have a look at a part of Botvinnik's comments to this move: "My positional feeling was telling me that the preparatory move **15.b3** was definitely not the strongest. so I tried to answer an impossible question: what was the best move? The move **15.b3** was taking out of action temporarily **♗a3**; **15.♗d1** could be answered by **15...♗g4 16.f3 ♗f5** ; **15.♗a2** was obviously a loss of time. I thought about **15.♗g3** (probably that was the best move) as well. Well. I gave up the idea to conquer the unconquerable, since the clock was

ticking along..." **15... ♖c5 ♠a2?!** The "wonders" continue. On the previous move White lost without any reason a lot of time and now he fluctuates away from his home analysis. After the obvious **16. ♖b2 ♗:c4** (16...f6 is rather dubious after **17. ♗h5+ g6 18. ♗h6**) **17. bc ♖d7 18. ♠g3 0-0-0 19. ♠:g7** and White has a definite advantage". – (Botvinnik).

16... ♗:c4 17. bc ♖d7 18. ♖a3 ♗f5 19. ♠d2 ♖c6 20. ♠e1 h5! Black is liquidating the threat g2 – g4 and prepares the exit of the king to "f7", after f7 – f6 previously.

21. ♗e3 f6 22. ♗:e6+ ♗:e6 23. ♠:e6+ ♗f7 24. ♠e7+ ♗g6 25. a5 ♠ad8 26. ♖d6 ♠he8 27. ♠:e8 ♠:e8. It is Black already with some advantage under his sleeve. Petrosian spent a lot of efforts to increase and realize his positional advantage but with a precise defence Botvinnik denied him the win and managed to draw on the 55th move. It is easy to understand that Black didn't play this variation anymore.

In conclusion, I would like to remind you that we are working on the opening preparation of a chess player at the level of first degree. Of course, his strength is far from that of Botvinnik, but naturally his opponent would hardly be named Petrosian...

The Slav Defence

White has to enter an opening dispute to try to fight for an opening advantage in this opening. White has the option, however with the right to choose the appropriate arms for the duel. I would like to clarify this, using chess language. After the moves **1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. ♗c3 ♗f6 4. ♗f3 e6** White has the choice between Botvinnik's variation, starting with **5. ♖g5** and the Meran, connected with the move **5.e3**.

Suppose White chose the Meran. **5.e3 ♖bd7 6.♗d3 dc 7.♗:c4 b5 8.♗d3 a6 9.e4 c5**



Diagram 68

Once again White has the option. White can play two principally different continuations 10.d5 and 10.e5. Suppose White played **10.e5**. Complications follow: **10...cd 11.♖:b5 ♖:e5 12.♖:e5 ab 13.♗:b5+ ♗d7 14.♖:d7 ♖a5+ 15.♗d2 ♖:b5 16.♖:f8 ♖:f8**



Diagram 69

White can make his choice one more time. He can offer a pawn sacrifice with 17.a4, or play timidly 17.b3. In both cases Black has to analyze these two lines thoroughly, because the position is very sharp and you can not afford to play it without due homework against a well prepared opponent. As you can

see the task of White is twice easier. My pupils usually play the Meran in the Slav defence and have their own analysis which can only be confirmed as right or wrong in practice. We are going to investigate now the approach to the Meran in this book, since our aim is to familiarize the reader with the methods of work in the opening. I wouldn't like just to offer variations that the reader is going sooner or later to change when he forms his own opening repertoire.

So, **1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♖c3!**? White would like to deprive the opponent of the opportunity to play the line **3.♖f3 ♖f6 4.♖c3 dc 5.a4 ♗f5**, which might be favourable for White but if

White is oriented towards the Meran, it would be better to reduce the opponent's choice. **3...♟f6**. Nowadays, the Winawer counter-gambit is hardly interesting, since White can react at least by 4.cd cd 5.e4, and as for 3...dc we are going to take a look at the brilliant game Portisch – Saidy, San Antonio 1972. **4.e3!**



Diagram 70

In the diagrammed position the most acceptable move for Black is **4...e6**, and White by playing **5.♟f3** transposes into the Meran. If Black tries to squeeze through with the light square bishop in front of the "e" pawn with **4...♟f5**, White can after **5.cd cd (5...♟:d5 6.♟ge2 and 7.e4) 6.♟b3** force the

opponent to go back with the bishop to c8, which had already happened in the game Alekhine – Capablanca, New York 1924. Well, although world champion No. 3 managed to defend Black's position, the loss of two tempi in the opening can hardly be recommended. Following this order of moves Black can choose Schlehter's system **4...g6** which is safe enough but rather passive. The Hungarian grandmaster G. Barza recommended something very interesting in this case **5.f3!? ♟g7 6.e4 de 7.fe c5 8.d5 0-0 ♟f3** with complicated but favourable for White position. Let's have a look now at the game that I promised you: Portisch - Saidy. **3...dc 4.e4! e5 (4...b5 5.a4 b4 6.♟a2 is favourable for White) 5.♟f3 ed 6.♟:d4 ♟:d4 7.♟:d4 ♟c5** (White is easily recapturing back the pawn after **7...b5 8.a4 b4 9.♟d1 ♟a6 10.♟f4 ♟f6 11.f3** having much better perspectives.) **8.♟e3 ♟f6 9.f3 ♟bd7 10.♟:c4 0-0**



Diagram 71

We have a typical position, in which White has a pawn advantage on the king side, and Black on the Queen side. The standard plan for both sides in positions like that is to push forward the pawn majority combining this with the occupation by the rooks of the only open file "d". L. Portisch is

treating this position very subtly. He wants to utilize the bad position of the enemy light pieces. This endgame has been analysed in the Soviet edition of the book "Endgame Strategy" and I am going to include it here without any changes.

"Black has no weaknesses and White's advantage in development is rather meager. Yet, to consider Black's position satisfactory is out of the question. The white pawns in the centre have much greater potential mobility than the black pawns on the queen side. Still, the main drawback of Black's position is not this. His light pieces are suffocating due to the lack of space, while the light pieces of Portisch have excellent coordination. The following precise play of the Hungarian grandmaster is an instructive example of the transformation of one advantage into another. The difference in the piece disposition, which was so difficult to evaluate is gradually transforming into more than obvious defects of the pawn structure. **11. ♖e2 ♜b6 12. ♗b3 ♞e8 13. ♞hd1 ♗d7 14. ♞ac1!** White is not in a hurry to double the rooks on the open file, but relies on the unfavourable position of the enemy pieces, which as I. Haitun deftly mentioned "are hanging in the air". The threat is 15. ♜cb5, and as for 14... ♗f8 15. a4! is very strong. **14... ♞ac8.** 14... ♞ad8 is unsatisfactory because of 15. ♜cb5 ♗f8 16. ♜:a7! ♜a8 (17. ♜d:c6 was the threat) 17. a4! ♜c7 18. ♜ab5 ! (Haitun) **15. a3!** Black has no space and he

has difficulties playing this position, so its very important for White to keep the tension making calm improving moves. **15...h6 16.♖c2!** Just like before, White has many more useful moves, so Saidy being afraid of a total squeeze makes some concessions. **16...♗:d4 17.♗:d4 ♗e6 18.♗e6 fe.** This change of the pawn structure for Black is not a good omen, but there was nothing much else to do. In case of **18.♗:e6 19.a4!** was very strong, and as for **19...c5 20.♗:f6 ♗:f6 21.a5** and **22.♗d5.** The pawn on "e6" should control the "d5" square.



Diagram 72

19.♗:b6! Wonderfully played. It is a pity to exchange this beautiful bishop for the wretched enemy knight but it is very important to be able to transform one advantage into another in the process of winning a better position. Well, you always have the fear that you might go for something cheap and lose your advantage. That is the moment to

show real class.

It may sound paradoxical but a lot of what is called "endgame chess technique" is often reduced to the creation of "bad pieces" for the opponent, and the exchange of your "bad pieces" for the "good pieces" of the opponent.

19...ab 20.♗a4 b5 21.♗c5 ♖c7 22.♖cd2 ♗f7 23.♗e3 ♗e7 24.f4 b6 25.♗d3 ♖d8?! Now the white knight reaches the "e5" square and the game will soon be over. As Haitun recommended Black had a wonderful chance – **25...♗g4+!**, including an interesting trap. If White plays carelessly **26.♗f3?** after **26...♗:h2+! 27.♗g3 ♖d8!! 28.♗:h2 ♖cd7 29.♗g3 c5 30.♗f3 c4 31.♗e3 ♖:d3+ 32.♖:d3 ♖:d3+** and Black draws the arising pawn-endgame. White should have to play **26.♗e2!** and try to win the knight endgame after for example **26...♖d8! (26...♗:h2 27.♗e5) 27.h3 ♗f6**

28.♖e3 ♖cd7 29.♗e5 ♖d2 30.♗:c6+ ♗e8 31.♖:d2 ♖:d2 32.♗:d2
♗:e4+ 33.♗d3! ♗d6 (33...♗c5+ 34.♗d4 ♗d7 35.♗a7!) 34.♗c3! ♗d7
35.♗a5+.

26.♗e5 ♖:d2 27.♖:d2 c5 28.g4 g5. Otherwise White will get a decisive space advantage pushing forward the "g" and "h" pawns on the king side. **29.f5 c4 30.♗d4 ♖c8 31.♖e2 ♗d7.** Well, the rook endgame is hopeless for Black, but any other moves wouldn't change anything much. **32.♗:d7 ♖d8 33.♖d2! ♖:d7 34.♗c3 ♖c7 35.♖d4 ♖c5 36.a4! ba 37.♖:c4 ♖a5 38.♖c6 ef 39.gf a3** The white king manages to take care of the enemy passed pawn in the pawn endgame arising after: 39...♖c5+ 40.♖:c5+ bc 41.♗c4 ♗d6 42.f6 h5 43.e5+ ♗e6 44.♗:c5.

40.ba ♖:a3 41.♗d4 ♖h3 42.♖:b6 Black resigns.

The Tarrasch defence is not the most popular opening with the young players. White has a wide choice of positional schemes, and a lot depends here on the preferences and tastes of the individual player. I am not going to deal extensively with the theory of the Tarrasch defence. I am going to acquaint you with one of the games of the author.

Shereshevsky – Zholnerovitch ***Bidgosc 1990***

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 c5 4.cd. Generally speaking, if White insists to avoid the Shara – Hening gambit, he must play 4.♗f3 and to answer 4...cd with 5.♗:d4 e5 6.♗b5 a6 7.♖a4 but you don't need to be afraid of this opening. One of my students, Genadi Sagaltchik used to play sometimes this gambit for Black but without too much success. White managed to win beautifully in the game O. Danielian – Sagaltchik, Kramatorsk 1989. After 4...cd 5.♖a4+ ♗d7 6.♖:d4 ed 7.♖:d5 ♗c6 8.♗f3 ♗f6 9.♖d1 Black chose the rare 9...♖e7, instead of the ordinary 9...♗c5. There followed: 10.g3! 0-0 11.♗q2 h6 12.0-0 q5 13.♗d4 ♖c5 14.♗:c6 ♗:c6 15.♖b3

♠:g2 16.♙e3! ♠d5 17.♘:d5 ♚:d5 18.♖ac1+ ♜b8 19.♞a4
 ♠c5 20.♠:c5 b6 21.♙e7 and Black resigned.

4...ed 5.♘f3 ♘c6 6.g3 ♘f6 7.♙e2 ♙e7 8.0-0 0-0 9.♙g5
 cd. After 9...c4 10.♘e5 ♙e6 11.f4 White, as a rule, has the
 advantage. And after 9...♙e6 10.dc ♠:c5 11.♠:f6 ♚:f6
 12.♘:d5 ♚:b2 13.♘c7 ♖ad8 14.♞c1 Black has to defend a
 rather unpleasant endgame. 10.♘:d4 h6 11.♙f4!? With this
 move White orients towards the exchange ♘:e6 followed by
 e2 – e4, which became popular after the match Kasparov –
 Smyslov, Vilnius 1984, for example 11...♙g4 12.h3 ♙e6
 13.♘:e6 fe 14.e4 d4 15.e5 ! dc 16.ef ♠:f6 17.bc ♠:c3 18.♖b1
 ♘a5 19.♞g4 with more than sufficient compensation for the
 pawn. 11...♙b4 !? 12.♖c1 ♙g4 13.h3!. White is not afraid of
 13...♘:d4 14.hg ♠:c3 15.♖:c3 ♘e6, at least because of 16.e3.
 13...♙e6. The idea of Black becomes clear. He is not afraid of
 14.♘:e6 fe 15.e4 because after 15...d4 16.e5 ?! dc 17.ef
 Black can play 17...cb, as well as simply 17...♚:f6. 14.a3 ♙a5
 15.b4 ♙b6 15...♘:d4 is not good for Black after 16.ba and
 17.a6. 16.♘:e6! fe



Diagram 73

17.b5! The immediate
 17.e4?! de! 18.♘:e4 e5 doesn't
 work because Black seizes the
 initiative. White deprives the
 enemy knights from the control
 of the centre and intends to
 push e2 – e4 some time later.
 17...♘a5 18.e4 de 19.♘:e4
 ♘:e4 20.♙:e4. Two bishops
 and a much better pawn
 structure determine a big advantage for White at first sight,
 but Black's counterplay against the "f2" square is enough to
 almost level the chances. 20...♚:d1 21.♖c:d1 ♖ad8!



Diagram 74

I stopped here and thought for about half an hour to make the plan for my further actions. White must play actively to take hold of the initiative. At first White must prevent $g7-g5$ and dissuade Black from the attack on the "f2" square. **22. E:d8! E:d8 23. A:g6!** The bishop leaves the wonderful central outpost, but now the enemy king will not feel very comfortable. **23... Q:c4 24. Be1!** I didn't enjoy of course, giving back the pawn but there was no time for 24.a4. Black could immediately force a draw after 24.a4 e5 25. A:c1 Q:d2. **24... Q:a3 25. E:e6 A:c5.** If 25... Q:b5 then 26. Be7. **26. Be5 A:d6.** If 26... b6 – 27. Be8+. **27. Ed5 Ae7 28. E:d8+ A:d8 29. Ad3 a6!** Black decides to immediately give up the pawn, the lost of which is unavoidable in connection with the threat 30. Ad6. **30. ba ba 31. A:a6**



Diagram 75

As a result of this forced line, the game proceeded from the previous diagram into the position of this one. White has a clear advantage without any doubt, but can White win this endgame. Unfortunately the further part of the game was played in a mutual desperate time-trouble and I haven't been

able to keep the score. The outcome came as a jolt from the blue:



Diagram 76

In the diagrammed position Black played 1...d4, and White blundered with 2...e3?? which led to a draw after 2...g5!, since the move 3...d3 didn't promise anything after the "zwischen zug" 3...gf!. Instead of the obvious mistake 2...e3 White had excellent chances to win the game after all the other

retreats along the diagonal "g1 – a7", for example to the "b6" square.

Black can not play 2...g5? anymore, because of 3...d3 dxf6 4.fg hg 5...e3, and if Black plays passively White goes with one of the bishops to e5, having displaced the enemy knight from the centre with the other bishop – d3.

The Nimzo-Indian Defence

The Nimzo-indian defence is the key opening for the chess player who is playing close opening systems for White. Including the Nimzo in your opening repertoire means you will be able to play aggressive systems in the Queen's Gambit like: 1.d4 dxf6 2.c4 e6 3.dxc3 d5 4.cd ed 5.dg5 or in the Modern Benoni 1.d4 dxf6 2.c4 e6 3.dxc3 c5 4.d5 ed 5.cd d6 6.e4 g6 7.f4.

On the other hand, when you play d3 on move three, you facilitate the orientation of the opponent in the different openings and give him a much wider scope of choice. Well, I think that hardly anybody knows how to obtain some serious advantage in the Nimzovitch defence, but the number of different positions in this opening is very wide and the

strategical aspects are very complicated, so most of the strongest players in the world have a keen interest towards the Nimzovitch defence, for both White and Black. My students, at the beginning of their work with me, play usually this opening for both colors, and later when they become strong masters some of them decide to lessen the strategical risk and usually turn to some quiet schemes of the Queen's Indian defence or the Catalan with White, or sometimes play the King's Indian defence with Black. By the way, I have noticed something very peculiar – the chess players that play only the King's Indian defence for Black, after having been through the Nimzo, start playing the King's Indian on an entirely different, much higher level than before. We have to discuss first the ways to include the Nimzovitch defence in White's opening repertoire.

After the moves **1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♚b4** we are going to choose the move **4.e3**. Now Black has the choice between 4...0-0, 4...c5, 4...b6 and 4...d5, and you must have in mind that the last two moves lead to different lines, while 4...0-0 and 4...c5 many times lead to one and the same variation. So, **4...b6**. White has the choice now how to develop the knight? We prefer the move 5.♗e2, but usually at first I suggest that my students played the sharp variation with a pawn sacrifice **5.♚d3 ♚b7 6.♗e2!? ♚:g2 7.♙g1**



Diagram 77

7...♚e4 – The most natural move, although 7...♚f3 is also very interesting. This line hasn't been tested seriously in practice yet, and it gives an ample opportunity to the young player to test his creative abilities. Of course, White is risking a lot – it

is a pawn sacrifice after all, but it would be very useful for the young player to play for the initiative even without a pawn, and later on some higher level to work on the line 5. ♖e2. I will give you two examples of my and Elena Zayac's practice.

Shereshevsky – Panczyk, Bidgoshc 1990

8.a3! Naturally, White can not recapture the pawn back because of the move 8...♠g6, and the move 8.♖g3 was rejected by me just for common sense reasons. Black has no weaknesses and I didn't want on top of the extra pawn to give Black some positional advantages as well, like doubled "c" pawns. **8...♠:c3+ 9.♖:c3 ♠:d3 10.♖:d3 g6 11.e4 d6.** Now White should make a plan for his further actions and maybe first of all make a decision about the future of the bishop. **12.♠h6!?** Black can not castle short now and White is ready to castle on the Queen side and push forward the "f" pawn. **12...♖bd7 13.f4 ♖h5 14.0-0 ♖e7.** White has the initiative but Black doesn't have any weaknesses as before. The moment of crisis is approaching. **15.e5!?** **0-0 16.c5 ♖b8** This move is practically forced to prevent the threat 17.♖a6+ and 18.♖b5.



Diagram 78

This is the critical position. White must find the way to continue the attack. 17.cd cd 18.♖e4 looks very tempting. But after 18...d5 19.♖d6+ ♖:d6 20.ed ♖:d6 the position is something that Black could only dream about. Lets try something different – 17.♠g5 f6 18.ef and Black can not play 18...♖:f6

because of the 19.♖e4 ♖bd7 20.c6. But Black can play 18...♖f7 and after 19.cd recapture on d6 not with the pawn, which is bad after 20.d5, but with the rook 19...♖d6! White can

now win the "a7" pawn with 20.♖b5. but after 20...♗d5 21.♗:a7+ ♖b7 22.♖b5 h6 we can hardly speak about any advantage for White. Therefore White must exchange on "d6" beforehand. So **17.cd! cd 18.♗g5 f6 19.ef**. In this way White forced the opponent to capture on "d6" with the pawn and it is now possible to win the "f6" pawn **19...♗:f6**. The "c" pawns are not present on the board anymore and 20.♖e4 will be met simply by 20...♖bd7. White would like to open the position even more. **20.d5!** It becomes clear now that Black's position is very difficult. If 20...e5? then 21.fe ♗:e5 22.♗de1 winning a piece **20...♗hf8 ?! 21.♗h3!** White is recapturing back a pawn, keeping an overwhelming positional advantage. **21...♗de8 22.♗ge1 ♗c7 23.de ♖h5 24.♖b1**. Black's position is lost. White must find the best tactical solution to convert his advantage into a win. **24...♗f5 25.♖d5 ♗b7 26.♗c1+ ♖c6 27.♖e7+ ♗:e7 28.♗:e7 ♗:e7 29.♗:c6+ ♖b7 30.♗c3!** The last move of White threatens 31.♗c8 and includes a subtle tactical trap. **30...♗:f4 31.♗c7+!** Black resigns.

Black hasn't made any blunders in this game but still he had a very difficult position around move 20. Probably the whole concept of a passive defence on the last three ranks, just for one pawn, is hardly acceptable from the point of view of the practical competitive player.

Zayac – Litinskaya Leningrad 1991

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3.♖c3 ♗b4 4.e3 b6 5.♗d3 ♗b7 6.♖ge2 ♗:g2 7.♗g1 ♗e4 8.a3 ♗:c3+ 9.♖:c3 ♗g6. In this game, contrary to the previous one, Black decided to keep the bishops. **10.e4 d6 11.♗g5 ♖bd7 12.f4 e5 13.de de 14.f5 ♗h5**



Diagram 79

15. ♖e2? White decides not to play the most natural move **15. ♖a4 !**, but this is a mistake. Zayac didn't like during the game **15... ♗e7**. She could play however **16. ♖c6 ♖c8 17. b4** and Black has a very difficult position since after **17... ♗d6 18. ♗:d6 cd 19. ♖b5** the material equality allows White to convert

the big positional advantage into an almost sure win. **15... ♖:e2 16. ♗:e2**. This is an awkward looking move. Capturing with the queen looked more natural.

16... ♗c6 17. ♗d6 ♖c8 18. ♖ad1 ♗e7 19. ♗d2. White prefers to play a middle-game position. Going into an endgame with **19. ♖h4** was also possible, keeping the initiative after **19... ♗:d6 20. ♖:d6 ♗e7 21. ♖d2 ♖hg8 22. b4**.

19... ♖c7 20. ♖h4 ♖g8 21. b4 ♗d8 22. b5. The absence of a pawn forces White to strive for an immediate crisis. Such a straightforward approach is easy to understand but is not always effective. On the contrary, sometimes it is much more difficult for the defending side when the opponent combines sharp actions with calm positional improving moves without any direct threats. Playing **22. b5** Zayac wants to secure the control over the "d5" square, but meanwhile White's pawn structure on the queen side deteriorates. The manoeuvre **♗e3 – d3 – c2** deserved attention to keep the king away from danger. **22... ♗c8 23. ♗d6**. Well, the effect of the insecure position of the white king becomes clear. Since it is too dangerous to play **23. bc ♖:c6 24. ♖d5 ♗c5** and Black seizes the initiative. **23... ♗:d6 24. ♖:d6 ♖e8 25. ♖d2 ♖df6 26. ♖gd1**



Diagram 80

Although White didn't play quite precisely, the initiative is still on his side.

26...g5 27.♖d8+ ♘b7
 28.♗g3 cb 29.♙:e5 ♖:c4
 30.♖b8+?! White starts an adventurous attack in the time-trouble and loses this interesting game in several moves. The coordination of the white bishop

and the white knight are the key factor of the position. Threatening the "e4" pawn. Black tried to hamper it. Well, Black had a serious material advantage – two extra pawns. Therefore the positional advantages are much more important for White right now than the material, since White is irrevocably behind in that aspect. Consequently White had to sacrifice the exchange now with 30.♖1d7+! with the idea after 30...♙:d7 31.♖:d7+ ♘c7 32.♖:f7 ♖e8 33.♗g7 to reach a very sharp position, the outcome of which would be practically impossible to predict in the time-trouble.

30...♙a6 31.♖dd8 ♘g4 32.♙d5? White had to comply with 32.♗d4 ♙ef6 (32...♙:h2) 32...♙:e5 33.♖a8 ♖:e4 + 34.♙d2 ♖d4+ 35.♙e2 ♙c6 36.♖d7 ♙f6 37.♙:f6 ♖:a8. White resigned.

Lets have a look now at the move 4...d5 which leads to the Botvinnik's system. 5.a3 ♙:c3+ If the bishop retreats to "e7" White has an extra tempo a2 – a3 in comparison with the variation of the Queen's gambit arising after 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♙f3 ♙f6 4.♙c3 ♙e7 5.e3. Besides the move 6.♙f3 White can try to develop this knight on "e2" with the idea to prepare later a pawn advance in the centre or on the king side. I am going to show you two games on this theme of my student A. Zazhoghine.

Zazhoghine – Ahramenko Mogilev 1990

1.d4 $\text{c}6$ 2.c4 e6 3. $\text{c}3$ $\text{b}4$ 4.e3 0-0 5. $\text{d}3$ d5 6.a3
 $\text{e}7$ 7. $\text{g}e2$ c5 8.0-0 b6?! 9.cd ed 10. $\text{c}f4$ c4? Black
 diminishes the tension in the centre and allows White to turn
 his attention fully to an active play in the centre and on the
 king side. 11. $\text{c}c2$ $\text{b}7$ 12. $\text{f}3!$? a6 13. $\text{d}d2$ b5 14.g4! White
 created some pressure on Black's central "d5" pawn and
 combined it with active actions on the king side. 14... $\text{E}a7$
 15. $\text{g}g2$. Zazhoghine avoids the straightforward march of the
 "g" pawn 15.g5 and prefers to bring some reserves over to the
 king side.

15... $\text{d}d6?$! The black queen is rather misplaced here,
 because of White's potential threat $\text{d}d2 - b4$, but Black had
 an inferior position already. 16.f3 $\text{E}e8$ 17. $\text{c}h1$ $\text{d}c6$ 18. $\text{c}e2$
 $\text{c}fd7?$ 19. $\text{c}g3$ g6 20. $\text{c}f5!$ This beautiful positional sacrifice
 decides the game in favour of White. 20...gf 21.gf+ $\text{c}h8$
 22. $\text{E}g1$ $\text{d}f6$ 23. $\text{d}b4$ $\text{c}c7$

24. $\text{d}e7!!$ Black resigns.



Diagram 81

In the next game, which I am going to include here without
 any comments, White was better all the time, despite that
 Black was playing much more sensibly than in the previous
 game. I wouldn't like to analyze games like that thoroughly.
 My aim is to show the reader the method of teaching opening
 principles to the young player on the level of master's

candidate. In this game White uses an active well thought-over scheme, while Black is at a loss to find any suitable counter-action.

Zazhoghine – Sarafanov

Saki 1990

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♘b4 4.e3 0-0 5.♙d3 d5 6.a3 ♗e7
7.♗ge2 b6 8.cd ed 9.0-0 ♙d6 10.h3 ♘b7 11.♗b5 ♗e7
12.♖f4 a6 13.♗c3 ♖d6 14.♖f3 ♗bd7 15.g4 ♖fe8 16.♖g2
♖ab8 17.f3 ♖f8 18.♗ce2 c5 19.♗g3 g6 20.♗h1 cd 21.ed
♗e6 22.♗:e6 fe 23.♙d2 ♗f8 24.g5 ♗d7 25.♘b4 ♖f4 26.♗e2
♖e3 27.♘:f8 ♖:f8 28.♖ad1 e5 29.♘b1 ed 30.♗:d4 ♖be8
31.♖g3 ♖f4 32.♗g2 ♗e5 33.♖fe1 ♖:g3+ 34.♗:g3 ♗e4 35.b3
♗:a3 36.♙d3 b5 37.h4 ♗f7 38.h5 b4 39.hg+ hg 40.♖:e8
♖:e8 41.♖h1 ♖g8 42.♖h7+ ♖g7 43.♖h8 ♗e7 44.♗f4 ♗b5
45.♘:b5 ab 46.♗e5 ♗d7 47.♗f6 ♖e7 48.♗:g6 ♖e3 49.♖h7+
♗c8 50.♗f6 ♖d3 51.♖h4 ♗c7 52.g6 Black resigned.

Lets go back to the move 5...♘:c3+. The play might continue like this:

6.bc c5 7.cd ed 8.♙d3 0-0 9.♗e2! White intends to create a mobile pawn chain in the center with f2 – f3 and e3 – e4. In this book we are going to limit ourselves to the historic game Botvinnik – Capablanca, "AVRO" tournament 1938, where this plan was played for the first time. More than half a century has passed ever since, but the strategical ideas in this position remain virtually the same. If the reader wants to get acquainted with the contemporary state of affairs in this line, he should look in the appropriate theoretical books.

9...b6 10.0-0 ♙a6 11.♘:a6 ♖a6 12.♘b2?! White is in a hurry to consolidate the centre, which is not under any threat anyway and deflected the bishop from the important "c1 – h6" diagonal. Nowadays the theory considers best in this position the move 12.♖d3.

12... ♘d7 13.a4 ♖fe8?! A natural looking but imprecise move. The pawn exchange in the centre 13...cd 14.cd was much better with the idea to take hold of the open "c" file next with 14...♖fc8. **14. ♘d3 c4?!**



Diagram 82

Capablanca plans to win the "a4" pawn with the help of the manoeuvre ♖a6–b8–c6–a5–b3. Nowadays it is well known that to push the black pawn to "c4" is favourable for Black only when White has little or no hopes to organize the pawn advance in the centre. This game was, however one of the first

attempts to play positions like that, both for Botvinnik and Capablanca. Well, Black manages finally to realize his plan but the price he pays for this turns out to be very costly.

15. ♘c2 ♖b8 16. ♖ae1 ♖c6. The opponents are playing imprecisely all the time. As Botvinnik pointed out White had to start with the move 16.♖g3, while Black had to play 16...♖h5 as an answer to 16.♖ae1.

17. ♖g3 ♖a5. After 17...♖e4 White would have retreated with the knight to "h1".



Diagram 83

18.f3 ♖b3 19.e4 ♖:a4

Both sides are close to the complete realization of their aims. White succeeded with the central pawn advance, while Black managed to win the "a4" pawn. The further development of the game should clarify who has the trump suit.

20.e5 d7 21.f2. Black was threatening 21...c5. **21...g6 22.f4 f5 23.ef f6 24.f5 e:e1 25.e:e1 e8.** The most natural move after which, what's happening on the board is more or less forced. White had a very strong attack after 25...f8 26.f4! which was confirmed by the plenty of analysis published in the chess literature.

26.e6! e:e6 27.fe g7 28.f4 e8 29.e5 e7



Diagram 84

This position is an integral part of the most of the chess textbooks. The brilliant combination of Botvinnik has become part of the basic chess education. Here are the final moves of this memorable game: **30.a3! e:a3 31.h5+! gh 32.g5+ f8 33.f6+ g8 34.e7.** The paradoxical variation

34.f7+ h8 35.g3!! was also winning. **34...c1+ 35.f2 c2+ 36.g3 d3+ 37.h4 e4+ 38.h5 e2+ 39.h4 e4+ 40.g4 e1+ 41.h5.** Black resigns.

Botvinnik's system has become a very rare guest of the contemporary tournaments. I can't remember a game in this system of anybody of my pupils, so I'll show you my game with E. Ubilava.

Shereshevsky – Ubilava Cheliabinsk, 1974

1.d4 f6 2.c4 e6 3.c3 b4 4.e3 c5 5.a3?! a:c3 6.bc d5 7.cd ed 8.d3 0-0 9.e2 c6 10.0-0 b6. Usually Black plays b7 - b6 with the idea a6, and when he develops the knight on "c6" 10...e8 habitually comes next. The game Vaganian – Balashov, Leningrad, 1977 is very instructive: 10...e8 11.f3 c7 12.a2 d7 13.d3 ac8 14.e2 b6 15.h1 cd 16.cd

♠a5 17.♖b2! ♗d6 18.♖b4. White neutralized opponent's pressure on the "d4" pawn in a very original way and after 18...♗c7 played 19.e4! with a clear advantage (19...♗c6 20.e5 ♗:b4 21.ab).

11.♗b2?! White is defending the "d4" pawn a little bit too early, since presently it is not threatened by anything at all. Unfortunately the "e3" pawn becomes weak. 11.f3 would be much stronger with the idea to plan the actions along the standard scheme: ♖a2, ♗g3 ♖e2 and then ♗d1 – e1 – f2, or even ♗e1, g2 – g4, ♗g3. **11...♠a5 12.♗g3 ♖e8**



Diagram 85

White has already some difficulties due to the dubious move 11.♗b2. White has to bring to the "e" file the king's rook, to be able to prepare f2 – f3. **13.♖e1 ♗e4!** What can White do now? 14.f3 ♗:g3 15.hg ♗b7 16.e4 de 17.fe cd 18.cd ♗g5 is not very promising because White's centre does

not represent strength but weakness. In case of 14.♗h1 ♗b7 15.f3 ♗d6 the pawn advance e3–e4 will become very problematic, while Black will have excellent counter-play on the queen side. Therefore White decided to provoke sharp complications with the move **14.♗h5!?** Ubilava accepted the bait with **14...c4**. If 14...g6 15.♗h6 ♗:g3 16.hg cd White could try the original recapture 17.ed! with an initiative.

15.♗c2 ♖e6 16.f3!? ♖h6 17.♗:h6 gh 18.fe ♗b3 19.♖ad1 ♗g4 20.♗:b3 cb 21.♖d2



Diagram 86

How to evaluate this position? The material advantage is with Black, while the positional advantage is on the White side. Well, in a correspondence game Black's chances will probably be better. On the board in a competitive game, to play with White is much easier because White has

the initiative and very often the time-trouble is coming... Lets not criticize the play of the two opponents because there is not much sense in this, as for a thorough analysis of the position – it's definitely outside of the aims of this book. Lets just play this adventurous game to the end, in which White was luckier.

21...♖g5 22.♠f2 ♜e8 23.e5 h5 24.♘f1 ♜f5 25.♙d2 ♜c2 26.c4 dc 27.♙:c4 ♜g6 28.♙d6 ♜e6 29.e4 h6 30.♠c1 b5 31.h4 ♜e7 32.d5 ♜:e5 33.♠c8+ ♘h7 34.♙:b5 ♜d7 35.♠c7 ♜:b5 36.♙:e5 ♜e8 37.♜f6 ♙:e4 38.♠e7 ♜a4 39.♠:f7+ ♘g8 40.♙b2 Black resigned.

4...0-0 As we have already mentioned, this move usually leads to a transition to some other lines if White plays principally 5.♙d3 or 5.♘f3. The lines after these two moves usually interpose, just like as if Black has played 4...c5. The difference in the move order depends entirely on the tastes of the chess player and sometimes on some fine points in the treatment of some key variations. Yet, now and then there is a key difference between 4...0-0 and 4...c5, which can be seen particularly well in the Rubinstein line beginning with the move **5.♙e2**.

I have been always trying to teach my pupils the Saemish system and some different lines of the "Tabia" when they play

on the white side of the Nimzovitch defence. The variations, I have mentioned, are so difficult and complicated that I do not rely that the young players, I have been working with, will learn them completely. I would like them to understand the basic strategical schemes and the key methods of playing, while the knowledge of forced variations and analysis is not so necessary, since the evaluation can often change when there is some transpositions of moves. Besides, it is essential for the chess player at the beginning of his study of the Nimzovitch defence to work on all the games of M. Botvinnik played in this opening, published in his legacy "The Chess Practice of Botvinnik". I am trying to give to my pupils some easier scheme in which White should obtain a decent position and then lead them to the study of the Saemish system.

The Rubinstein variation represents such a scheme. Well, it is complicated enough, but if you decide to follow the games of the eminent American grandmaster S. Reshevsky your task will become much easier. So, **5. ♖e2 d5 6. a3 ♜e7 7. cd ed**



Diagram 87

The plan of A. Rubinstein in the diagrammed position includes the fianchettoing of the light square bishop with further active play in the centre with the help of the pawns f2 – f3 and e3 – e4, and sometimes g3 – g4. Reshevsky preferred the calm development of his pieces, beginning with **8. ♗g3**, although

later the preparation of the movement of the central pawns comprised one of the main parts of the American grandmaster's plan. The contemporary theory considers the counterstroke **8...c5!** the only suitable reaction to the 8th move of White. Two of the games of Reshevsky are very

illustrative, both played in the famous tournament in Zurich, 1953, where both grandmasters Averbach and Taimanov avoided playing 8...c5.

Reshevsky – Averbach

8...♘e6 9.♙d3 ♜bd7 10.0-0 c6 11.♙d2 ♖e8. It is interesting to see grandmaster D. Bronstein's comments to this position: "Black thinks that his main task in the Nimzovitch defence has been accomplished: the pawn advance e3 – e4 has been delayed for a long time. White begins to patiently prepare the advance of the "e" pawn while Black as before adheres to the tactics of "the fortress awaits the siege", and the adventure a7 – a5 – a4 is in fact symbolic. Under the circumstances Black's position in the next 10 – 12 moves is worsening, and staying on one and the same place with the bishop – ♗c8 – e6 – d7 – c8 – e6 has no strategical idea, so the only object of Black was to demonstrate that his position was unassailable."

12.♖c2 a5 13.♝ce2 ♜b6 14.♝f4 ♙d7 15.♞fe1 ♗f8 16.f3 ♘c8 17.♞ac1 g6 18.♝fe2 ♙g7 19.h3 a4



Diagram 88

White prepared all his actions very carefully and now come the active central actions. **20.e4 de 21.fe ♙e6 22.♙e3 ♘b3 23.♖d2.** White has a very strong centre now and that gives him enough reasons to think about a king side attack. Black's position however is sound enough, so Reshevsky

decides to weaken it first, leaving aside the king side attack for better times. **23...♝fd7 24.♙g5! f6.** A very serious weakness, but it was not easy to give Black a good advice. If

24...♙f6. White exchanges the bishops, doubles the rooks on the "f" file and in connection with e4 – e5, ♖e4 and ♗h6 White has a very strong attack and the retreat of the black queen to b8 or c7 seemed to Black obviously very unaesthetic.

25.♙e3 ♜f8 26.h4 ♙f7 27.h5 ♖e6 28.♖f1 ♙f8 29.♖f2 ♖d7
30.♖cf1 c5. "Finally! Wasn't it better to play this on move 8?"
– (Bronstein)

31.d5 ♖c7 32.hg hg



Diagram 89

With the exception of the pawns a3 and b2, all White forces are connected in a powerful attacking formation. Black pieces are cramped on the last two ranks and the king's position is decisively weakened. The "e5" square is not a good enough consolation.

33.♖f4 The rook is headed to the open "h" file. 33...b5 34.♖h4 ♖e5 35.♗h1 Reshevsky takes away his king from the diagonal "g1 – a7", creating the threat ♙:c5, after which the capture of the bishop will be impossible because of the move ♗h6 with a mating attack. 35...♗d7? This is a blunder, but Black's position was very difficult anyway. 36.♖:f6 ♖g4 37.♙g5 ! ♙g7. Black couldn't accept the exchange sacrifice.

38.♖f4 ♖e5 39.♙f6 ♙:f6 40.♖:f6 ♖g7 41.♗g5 ♖h8 42.♖f5+ ♗:f5 43.♖:f5 ♖h4 + 44.♖g1 Black resigns.

Reshevsky – Taimanov

8...♖e8 9.b4 c6 10.♔d3 b5



Diagram 90

“You need not have a high chess education to label this move antipositional and put to it a question mark which was done by almost all commentators. It’s drawbacks are more than evident, but still this move was made by an international grandmaster, who no doubt saw some merits in it,

namely: Black eyes the “b4” pawn, preparing a7 – a5, with the idea to isolate one of the pawns on the queen side. As for the weak “c6” pawn, Black relies, by means of the manoeuvre ♖b8 – d7 – b6 – c4 to close the “c” file, enjoying the wonderful outpost in the process.” – (Bronstein).

11.♔d2! Reshevsky hinders the plans of the opponent very wisely. Now, 11...a5 is bad because of 12.ba ♖:a5 13.a4 and if 13...b4 then 14.♖a2 ♖a6 15.♔:a6. **11...♖bd7 12.a4!** It’s evident now that Black’s strategy has been a failure. **12...♔:b4 13.ab c5 14.0-0 c4?** The position becomes static now. The weak black “d5” pawn and the much better piece position give White a big positional advantage. It was much better for Black to exchange on “d4” and play 14...♖b6.

15.♔c2 a5. The “b5” pawn hampers Black on the queen side and after its exchange, White occupies the open files on the queen side. **16.ba ♖:a6 17.♖:a6 ♔:a6 18.♗a1! ♖b8 19.♗a4 ♔f8 20.♖b1 ♖e6.**



Diagram 91

21. ♖b2! A wonderful prophylactic move. Black intended to fight for the "b" file with 21... ♖b6, but now this would fail after 22. ♗a5!

21... g6 22. ♖ge2 ♗d6 23. ♖f4! ♗:f4 24. ef. On top of all the advantages of the White's position, now comes one more – the advantage of

the two bishops. The doubled "f" pawns of White prove to be very strong in this position since they will be the spearhead of the attack against the black king. **24... ♖bd7 25. h3 ♖b6 26. ♗a5 ♗b8 27. ♖:b6 ♗:b6 28. ♗a3** Reshevsky decides not to win a pawn with 28. ♖:d5, but to mount up the pressure. **28... ♖f8.** 28... ♗:d4 of course wouldn't work after 29. ♗e3.

29. ♗e3 ♗c8 30. g4! ♗b7 (31. g5 was the threat) **31. f5 g5 32. ♗e7h6 33. ♖a4 ♗c6 34. ♖c5.** 34. ♗d2 was terribly strong here, but White was in a desperate time-trouble. **34... ♗c8 35. ♗d8 ♖g7** "The tension in the time-trouble reached its peak here, since Reshevsky had several seconds for his last five moves, while Taimanov had a whole minute!". – (Bronstein)

36. ♗d2?! The two white bishops are next to each other on the second rank just for a moment and Taimanov finds immediately an excellent tactical counterchance. **36... ♗b5! 37. ♗:c8?** This move finally dissipates the fruits of the excellent previous play of White. White's idea to play for a mate has no grounds. It would be much better to restrict the scope of action of the enemy queen with 37. ♗c3 and after 37... ♗e8 – go to an endgame in which Black's defence would not be easy at all.

37... ♗b2 38. ♖g2 ♗:c2 39. ♗b4 ♖e4! 40. ♖:e4 ♗:e4 + 41. ♖g3 – the sealed move. Afterwards the opponents agreed

to a draw without an adjournment. Bronstein analyzes the following variation 41...♖h7 42.♗d6 ♖:d4 43.♗c7 ♖f6 44.♗e5 ♗d3+ 45.♖g2 ♗e4+ with a perpetual.

These games lead us to the following problem: "Why not play with White 8.b2 – b4, which does not allow 8...c5?"

If we open Taimanov's book "The Nimzo-Indian Defence", we are going to find the following answer: "8...c6. Black prepares counterplay with a7 – a5, which would not be good immediately because of 8...a5 9.b5 ♖bd7 10.♖g3 ♖b6 11.♗d3 ♗e6 12.0-0 and White has an excellent position – Sliva – Mititelu, Sofia 1957.

The calm development 8...♞e8 9.♖g3 ♖bd7 also deserves recommendation. M. Euwe gives: 10.♗d3 c6 11.b5 (11.0-0 b5!? 12.♗d2 ♖b6 13.a4 a6 with equality) 11...cb 12.♖:b5 a6 13.♖c3 b5 14.0-0 ♖b6 and Black has a good position.

On the contrary, it is not good to recommend to try to undermine the centre with 8...b6 9.♖g3 c5. The game Sliva - Porath, Leipzig 1960 continued 10.d4 bc 11.bc ♗:c5 12.♗e2 ♖c6 13.0-0 ♗e6 14.♖a4 and White obtained the positional advantage." **9.♗b2.** If 9.♖g3 ♞e8 10.♗d3 ♖bd7 (10...b5?! 11.♗d2! ♖bd7 12.a4! Reshevsky – Taimanov) 11.b5 The game follows M. Euwe's analysis that we looked over already. "In this way, we can see that 9.♖g3 does not promise White anything because of 9...♞e8 10.♗d3 ♖bd7 11.0-0 b5. What happens however, if White plays in this moment 12.a4!? It turns out that the manoeuvre of the black knight via the "b6" square to the "c4" square is already impossible, and after 12...♗:b4 13.♖a2 White regains the pawn with a much better position. Lets go back to Reshevsky's move 8.♖g3. We are convinced now that after a slow positional manner of play Black risks to get pressed. Lets have a look now at the other line, when Black plays 8...c5. Sometime ago my co-author of the book "Endgame Contours" master L. Slutskii noticed the

game Lilienthal – Larsen, Moscow 1962, which ended with a crush for Black. It went on.

8...c5 9.dc ♖:c5 10.♗e2 ♘c6 11.0-0 ♗e6 12.b4 d4 13.♙a4 ♗e7 14.e4.

The Danish grandmaster had a tremendous practical strength of playing in the seventies and his quick doom against grandmaster Lilienthal made me wonder. You can find the following recommendation in Taimanov's book "The Nimzo-Indian Defence" after 13.♙a4"...and in the game Lilienthal–Larsen Black could get here, with the move 13...♗b6, a good position." How to play after 14.e4? The threat is 15.♗b2, and 16.b5 winning the "d4" pawn. In case of 14...♙e5 (the pawn sacrifice 14...d3 is interesting but hardly advisable) 15.♗b2 ♘c4 16.♗:c4 ♖:c4 17.♙:c6! ab 18.♞e1 d3 19.♞d2 (19.♞e3).



Diagram 92

The White position is almost winning in strategical aspect. All his pieces are perfectly placed for the dark square's attack against the enemy king. If Black has some counterplay it has to be connected with 13...♗b6. Black failed to do this. So how should Black play in this variation? Most probably Black

should not play 11...♗e6, but try instead

11...d4!? 12.♙a4 ♗e7. The move 13.e4 might have some drawbacks now because of 13...♙e5 14.f4?! d3!, so White must prepare it with **13.b4** and try to utilize the piece activity in the symmetrical position after **13...de 14.♗:e3**



Diagram 93

The position in this diagram is not simple at all, irrelevant of the complete pawn symmetry and the abundance of open files. Black should defend precisely. If White manages to put the bishop on "f3" Black would have a rather difficult position. Therefore

14...d5! 15.dxc5. There seems to be nothing better. **15...dxc5 16.dxc3! 17.d8**. **17.c2 d:e2+ 18.d:e2 b6 19.d:e4 d:f5! 20.c:c6 d:c8 21.d:f6+ d:h8! 22.c:f3 c:f6** does not promise White much, since Black should be able to draw this endgame after a precise defence. **17...d:e2+ 18.d:e2 d:d8** is not so good after **19.d:d4 b6 20.d:e4** and Black has some problems.

19.dfd1 White has some initiative but it's not easy to convert it into a full point. The following variation is rather amusing: **19...b6 20.b5 bc 21.bc d:a6 22.d:c3 ddc8 23.d:d5 d:f8 24.d:a1 d:c6 25.d:b4 d:b6 26.d:c5** and Black still has some problems. Naturally, it is impossible to get from one position more than it can possibly give, but I repeat we are studying the system with **5.d:e2** as a temporary weapon against the Nimzovitch defence, to be able to play in tournaments and to have enough time to study thoroughly the Saemish system.

In the line **1.d4 d:f6 2.c4 e6 3.d:c3 d:b4 4.e3 c5 5.d:e2** we are going to use once again the already familiar method to avoid opening disputes just like in the variation with **4...0-0**. Black usually plays **5...cd 6.ed d5**, and after **7.a3 d:e7** White fights for the advantage with the move **8.c5**. All this is true, but we are going to play **8.d:f4 0-0 9.cd d:d5 10.d:c:d5**

ed 11.♠d3. We can find in M. Taimanov's book the game: Gligoric – Matanovic, Tel Aviv 1966 which continued 11...♗f6 12.0-0 g6 13.♗e3 ♖c6 with an equality.



Diagram 94

I wouldn't like to dispute here with Taimanov's evaluation. To talk about equality, however in a position where only a pair of knights and a couple of pawns are exchanged is a little bitearly, and does not necessarily mean the game will end in a draw. I managed to find a rather jolly game Nikolaevsky – Kajumov,

Riga 1975. 14.♗c1 ♗g7 15.♗c5 ♖e7 16.♗b3 b6 17.♗c3 ♗d8 18.♗fc1 ♗d8 19.♖e2 ♖f5 20.♗g5 ♗e8 21.♗f4 ♗d8 22.♗c7 ♗g5 23.♗b5 ♗:e2 24.♗:d5 ♗:f2 25.♗:f2 ♗:d4+ 26.♗e1 ♗h4+ 27.g3 ♗e7+ 28.♗d1 ♗:c3 29.♗:c3 ♗b7 30.♗:b7 ♗d8+ 31.♗d3 ♖e3+ 32.♗c1 ♗c5+ 33.♗b1 ♗c2+ 34.♗a2 ♗:d3 35.♗c8+ ♗g7 36.♗e5+ f6 37.♗:c2 ♖:c2 38.♗:d3 ♖e1 39.♗e4 fe 40.♗b3 Black resigns.

Naturally, I wouldn't like to advise my pupils to build their opening concept on such a tiny basis, but still this game shows that the possibilities to fight with White in this position are far from exhausted. We are not going to analyze this position, since this system is additional, and not the main one against the Nimzovitch defence, but I am going to mention that if Black, in answer to 14.♗c1, tries to snatch a pawn with 14...♖:d4 15.♗:d4 ♗:d4 16.♗:g6 ♗:f2+ after 17.♗:f2 fg 18.♗d4! Black's problems increase.

It is high time we started dealing with our basic system against the Nimzo, preferred by my pupils. The aim of this book however is the development of a method of studying the openings and not writing an opening monograph, so we are

going to study one more type of position with a pawn wedge in the centre.

After the moves 1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.e3 c5 (4...0-0) 5.♗d3 ♘c6 White can play 6.a3. Why just now, and not on move 4, or on the previous move? The idea is that if you play 4.a3 ♗:c3 5.bc Black has the additional opportunity to play the line with 5...b6, but even if Black plays 5...c5, White must play either 6.f3, which leads to an entirely different system, or after 6.e3 b6! sacrifice a pawn in the line 7.♘e2 ♗a6 8.♘g3 ♖c7 9.e4 cd 10.cd ♗:c4 11.♖c2 d5 12.♗d3 tested in the game Vaganian – Gulko, USSR 1977, which ended in a draw after a complex struggle.

What is wrong with 7.♗d3, after 1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.e3 c5 5.a3 ♗:c3+ 6.bc b6!

The fine point here is that the "f2" pawn has to go to "f3" closing the diagonal d1 – h5. So, 7.♗d3?! ♗b7 8.f3. Now Black has to develop just like in the main lines of the Saemish system. After 8...♘c6 9.♘e2 0-0 10.e4 ♘e8 White can play here 11.♗e3, but Black can after 11...♗a6 12.♘g3 ♘a5 13.♖e2 ♖c8 14.d5 win a pawn immediately with 14...♘d6, without the necessity to play the preparatory move 14...♖h4 – the standard attack 15.e5 ♘:c4 16.♖h5 g6 17.♖h6 (threatening 18.♘h5) is not present, because of the "f3" pawn. In the other line with 11.0-0, the position of the black bishop on "b7" allows Black to start the immediate attack on the "c4" pawn with 11...♘a5.

When the bishop is on "c8", such a strategy would be extremely dangerous (11...♗a6 is the right move) because after 12.f4, Black doesn't have 12...f5, because of 13.♘g3 g6 14.dc bc 15.ef ef 16.♗:f5, while the position of the bishop on "b7" enables it. On the other hand, in answer to 12.f4 f5 13.♘g3 Black is not obliged to play 13...g6. He has an excellent position after 13.♘d6.

So, 1.d4 ♟f6 2.c4 e6 3.♟c3 ♟b4 4.e3 c5 5.♟d3 ♟c6 6.a3 ♟:c3+ 7.bc 0-0.



Diagram 95

In this position 8.♟e2 seems to be the most natural move. Black has basically two plans here: to build a blocking pawn chain in the centre with d7 – d6 and e6 – e5, and to have counterplay on the queen side after the scheme: b7 – b6, ♟a6, ♟a5, ♟c8, ♟f6 – e8 – d6. In this book we are going to limit

ourselves to the first plan upon the games of the author and his pupils. White has however, a very curious move in the diagrammed position.

8.e4. The theory does not approve it on the basis of Szabo – Smyslov, Moscow 1956 in which Black played 8...cd 9.cd ♟:d4 10.e5 ♟a5+ 11.♟f1 ♟e8 (11...♟:e5 ?? 12.♟b2) 12.♟d2 ♟d8 13.♟b4 d6 14.♟:h7+ ♟h7 15.♟:d4 a5 16.♟c3 f6 17.♟h4+ ♟g8 with an advantage for Black. Instead of 16.♟c3, stronger is 16.♟:d6 ♟:d6 17.ed (17.♟d1 ♟d7 18.♟:d6 ♟a4) 17...♟d7 18.♟f3 f6, but Black has a satisfactory position according to the analysis of M. Euwe. This variation was referred to by Botvinnik and Abramov in the "Encyclopedia of Chess Openings".

There is something very strange, however. The "Encyclopedia" doesn't say a word about the training game Botvinnik – Averbach, Nikolina Gora 1956, which was included in the 3-volume work "The Chess Games of Botvinnik" and in the 4-volume work "Analytical and Critical Works"?!.

The game didn't last too long: 12.♟b2! (instead of 12.♟d2) 12...♟c6 13.♟f3 f5 14.♟c2! d6 15.♟e1 de 16.♟:e5 ♟f6 17.h3

♖c5 18.g4 ♘e4 19.♘:c6 ♗:c6 20.♙g1 ♖f7 21.♙e3 ♖c5 22.gf
 ef 23.♗:e4 fe 24.♖c3 Black resigned. Well, Black's play in
 this game was far from perfect, but nevertheless White played
 very beautifully. We intended to include the move 8.e4 in our
 armour and put the aforementioned game to a thorough
 analysis. If it is unfavourable for Black to take the "d4" pawn
 after 8.e4, in case of 8...♘e8 White can play 9.♗e3 and after
 9...b6 can play 10.♘f3! with the idea after 10...♗a6 11.0-0
 ♖c8 to have the opportunity with 12.♗e2 ♘a5 13.♘d2
 to protect the "c4" pawn safely and prepare the king side
 advance. When we analyzed the move 8.e4 patiently, we
 understood Black could try to overpass the opponent in
 development and to start an immediate conflict in the centre.

So, **8.e4 cd 9.cd d5! 10.cd**. If 10.e5 immediately, White
 has to reckon with the opportunity 10...dc! 11.♗:c4 ♗:d4
10...ed 11.e5 ♘e4 12.♘e2



Diagram 96

Had it been White's move
 now, after castling we could
 evaluate this position as
 strategically winning for White.
 But it is Black's move now and
 he can manage to get enough
 counterplay with **12...f6!** In case
 of 12...♗a5+ 13.♗d2 ♘:d2
 14.♗:d2 ♗:d2+ 15.♗:d2 White
 has somewhat better prospects

in the endgame. Now, White doesn't have 13.f3? because of
 13...♗a5+!, and after 14.♗f1 14...fe! is possible, and if
 14.♗d2 ♘:d2 15.♗:d2 ♗:d2+ 16.♗:d2 fe and Black simply
 has an extra pawn. The best way out for White in this position
 is to simply castle **13.0-0**. There can follow: **13...fe 14.♗:e4
 de 15.d5**. Now Black has to be very careful. If 15...♘e7 then
 16.♗g5! or 15...♘d4 16.♘:d4 ed 17.♗:d4 and White has

some hopes. But if Black plays **15...♗g4!** **16.dc ♖:d1** **17.♖:d1 ♗:e2** **18.cb ♗:d1** **19.ba♖ ♖:a8** **20.♗b2 ♗e2** **21.♗:e5** the draw seems inevitable.

So, we worked a little bit on 8.e4 and came to the conclusion that somehow Black manages to equalize. We can use all this knowledge when we play with Black from now on.

Lets go back now to **8.♗e2**. White protected the "d4" pawn with the idea to occupy the centre pushing forward the "e" pawn. As I have already mentioned, one of the most popular ways to fight against this plan is to build the blocking pawn chain c5 – d6 – e5. So, **8...e5** **9.0-0 d6**. White is not afraid of **9...e4**, since Black will not be able to keep the pawn outpost in the centre. **10.e4**



Diagram 97

And now "that is the question - to take or not to take on" d4".

My first experience in playing such positions, after taking twice on "d4", I had way back in 1974 in my game against A. Beliavsky. It was played in the first round of the tournament of "the young masters" and was full of erratic and nervous

decisions. The initiative was constantly fluctuating, but unfortunately for me White made the last mistake.

Shereshevsky– Beliavsky Cheljabinsk 1974

10...cd **11.cd ed** **12.♗g5**. I decided not to play **12.♗d2**, because of **12...♖d6** **13.♖b1 ♖c5**. but lately I came to the conclusion that the most promising move here was **12.♖b1**, with the idea **13.♗b2**.

12...♖e7. If **12...h6** **13.♗h4 g5** **14.♗g3 ♗h5**, White has at least **15.♗:d4**. **13.f4**. Black has the opportunity now to

simplify the position and to exchange one of the most active pieces of his opponent – the knight on "e2". 13.f3!? was safer. **13...♗g4 14.h3 ♕:e2 15.♖:e2 ♗e6 16.♖ae1 ♘d7 17.e5!** White should be in a hurry to prevent Black's knights from occupying the central outposts. **17...de5?** This is a losing move. Black had to play 17...f5 18.ef ♖:e2 19.♕:e2 ♘:f6 20.♕f3 and White would have had some compensation for the pawn, but still he could hardly rely on anything better than a draw.



Diagram 98

18.f5? What I said about the last move of Black is even more appropriate for this move. It is White who should lose now. After 18.♕:h7+! ♖:h7 19.f5 ♖d6 20.♖h5+ ♗g8 21.f6 White had a decisive attack.

18... ♖d6 19.f6 g6 20.♕h6 ♖fe8. This move was hardly necessary. Black could simply

take on "f6" without being afraid of 21.c5 ♖e6 22.♕c4 ♘d5 and Black should win. **21.♕e4 ♖e6** (21...♘c5!? deserved some attention as well.) **22.♕g5 ♘b6?** Move 20 and move 21 of Black were not the best, but still acceptable. His last move, however, gives White the opportunity to start a direct king side attack. Black didn't have to fear the loss of the exchange after 22...♘c5 23.♕d5. Playing 23...♖ae8 Black's advantage was sufficient enough for a win. **23.h4! ♖:a3.** 23...h6? was not good because of 24.♕:h6 ♖:f6 25.c5! ♖:f1+ 26.♖:f1.

24.♖f3 ♖c5 25.♖f2. As a consequence of Black's mistakes, White obtained an overwhelming attack. We played the next few moves in a mutual time-trouble. **25... ♗f8 26.h5 ♘d8.** (26...gh was much more logical) **27.hg hg**

28.♙:g6 ♘e8 29.♙f5 ♖:c4 30.♗h3 ♘d7 31.♗h8 ♗c8
 32.♗h2!. Prophylactics is useful even in super sharp positions. 32...♗c7?! (The clarifying 32...♖d6 had its merits)
 33.♗h4 ♗b8?. Here 33...♗d5 was a must. Now White is winning a piece. 34.♗:d8! ♗:d8 35.♙:e6 ♖d6 36.♗c1 ♗a5
 37.♙b3 ♗b6 38.♙d5 a6 39.♗h7?! (The right place for the queen was h5 and not h7) 39... ♗a7



Diagram 99

Now, it became my turn to make mistakes. I lost my last seconds to convince myself that White doesn't have anything after 40.♗b1 ♗c5 41.♙:b7 ♖:b7 42.♗:f7, because of 42...♗h8+, and since I had to make a move not to lose on time, I touched the bishop – 40.♙h6?. Now Black grabs again the initiative.

If I had to play with the dark square bishop, I should have complied with 40.♙d2. Of course best of all was to retreat with the queen to "h5" keeping the advantage. 40... ♗b5! This brings a dramatic change in the scene. 41.♙a2 – the sealed move. 41... ♗e2 42.♙b1 ♗h5+ 43.♗g1 e4 44.♗f1! The rook endgame after 44.♙:e4 ♖:e4 45.♗:e4 ♗:h6 46.♗c7 ♗e3+ 47.♗:e3 de 48.♗f1 ♗d2 49.♗:f7 ♗f2+ 50.♗g1 ♗f4 brings victory to Black.

44... ♗a8. Black prepares to push the "e" pawn, which wouldn't be possible immediately because of 45.♙:e3. 45.♗g7 d3 (in case of 45...♖f5 46.♗:f5 ♗:f5 47.♗:f7 White does not risk to lose.) 46.♗g5 ♗e2 47.♗d5. Black managed to push the central pawns indeed, but White's pieces became active once again. The draw now, looks like the most probable outcome.

47...Bg8 48.Δg7 ♖e3+ 49.♗h2 ♖b6 50.♙a2 ♖d8 51.♖b1
 ♖c7 52.♗g1 ♖c2



Diagram 100

53.♖b6? Well, who blunders last – he loses. White was anxious to win once again. After 53.♙h6 ♖g8 54.Δg7 ♖d8 this nerve-consuming game would have ended in a draw.

53... ♖c1+!. I overlooked this, thinking that Black should play 53...d2. 54.♗h2 ♖c7! 55.♖:a6 + ♗b8 56.♖:d6 ♖:d6 White resigned.

Shereshevsky– Litvinov **Minsk 1972**

The opponents did not follow a very precise order of moves in the opening of this game.

1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 e6 3.♖c3 ♙b4 4.e3 c5 5.a3?! ♙:c3+ 6.bc 0-0?! 7.♙d3 ♖c6 8.♗e2 b6 9.e4 e5?! 9...♗e8 is better. 10.0-0 ed 11.cd cd 12.♙b2. Since the "b6" square is occupied by the black pawn, White can play this move without any preparation like 12.♖b1. 12...♖e8.



Diagram 101

13.♗:d4!? White could simply protect the "e4" pawn with 13.f3 with a better position, but I was tempted by the positional pawn sacrifice 13...♗:d4 14.♙:d4 ♗:e4 15.♖e1 ♙b7 16.♗g4 ♗f6 17.♖:e8+ ♗:e8 18.♖e1 g6. The last several moves were forced.

White has two excellent bishops and a strong initiative, as a compensation for the pawn.

19. ♖c3 This battery is aimed at the enemy king. **20. ♖d4** is the threat. **19... ♗g7 20. ♖f4!** This move can be connected with multiple opportunities, like ♖h6 and ♖f6 etc. **20... f6 21. ♖h4!** White is not happy with **21. ♖:f6**, or **21. ♖:f6? ♗h5. 21... ♖f8 22. ♖:f6 ♗e8 23. ♗:e8 ♖:e8 24. ♖c3**



Diagram 102

Black returned the pawn and somehow neutralized White's attack. White still has a big positional advantage. **24... ♖c6 25. ♖d4 ♖f7 26. ♖c2!** Preparing ♖b3. **26... ♗f8 27. ♖d6+ ♗g8 28. ♖b3 ♖f5 29. c5+ ♗e6 30. ♖:e6+!** As you know, one of the advantages of the two bishops is that you can easily exchange a bishop for a knight in a favourable situation.

White enters an endgame of bishops of opposite colors with queens on and an extra pawn.

30... ♖:e6 (30...de is not any better for Black after **31. ♖b8+**) **31. ♖d4 ♗f7 32. cb ab 33. ♖g7+ ♗e8 34. ♖h8+ ♗e7 35. ♖b4+! d6 36. ♖:h7+ ♗e8 37. ♖h8+ ♗d7 38. ♖d4 ♖e5 39. ♖g4+ ♗c7** (39...♖f5 would have done Black no good, because after the exchange of the queens White gets two connected passed pawns on the king side).

40. h4 ♖a1+ 41. ♗h2 ♖e5+ 42. ♖g3 ♗d7 43. f3 ♗e6 44. ♖d2.



Diagram 103

44... ♖:g3+? The queen's exchange leads to a bishop ending, which is lost for Black but the other continuations wouldn't change anything much. **45. ♖:g3 ♜a4 46. ♖f4 ♜d1 47. ♖g5 ♖f7 48. ♜f4 d5 49. ♜e3 b5 50. ♜d4 ♜e2 51. f4 ♜d1 52. g4** and Black resigned.

Lets begin to study now the same position if Black abstains from capturing the "d4" pawn.

Shereshevsky– Yuferov
Minsk 1971

10... ♖h5



Diagram 104

A very interesting move. Black prepares to stop White's play on the king side by means of the eccentric **g7 – g5. 11. d5?!** White is in a hurry to block the center, but in vain. I was still a novice and I had almost no experience to play positions like that and I didn't have any feeling about the fine points.

11. ♜e3 was better, to answer **11...b6** with **12. f4** ; and to **11... ♖e7** answer **12. ♖d2** (**12. f4** is not so good here because of **12...ef 13. ♖:f4 ♖:f4 14. ♖:f4 f5 !**) with the idea to play **f2 – f3** and then either **g2 – g4** or **d4 – d5**. **11. f3!?** seems also very promising. There is some tension in the centre now, accordingly **11...g5** is much riskier, and in case of **11...cd 12. cd ed** the two moves **f2 – f3** and **♖f6 – h5** are evidently in

favour of White who can, besides the timid 13.♖b1, play the sharp 13.g4 ♖f6 14.♗g5.

11...♗e7? Black hasn't mastered the position either. I am going to give you the comments of grandmaster I. Boleslavsky to the last move of Black, from his book – The Tournament "Sokolsky – In memoriam":

"Black has two retreats – to a5 and to e7. Black chooses the safer one with the idea to keep the knight for the sake of defence on the king side. Accordingly Black doesn't get any counterplay. 11...♗a5 was the right move and then:

1) 12.f3 g5! 13.g3 ♖h8 14.♗h1 ♖g8 15.♗g1 ♗f6. Now 16.f4? ♗:g3 17.hg ♗h6+ 18.♗g2 gf gives Black a very strong attack.

2) 12.f4 (It is possible that Yuferov didn't like that particular move) 12...ef 13.♗:f4 ♖f6 ! (If 13...♗:f4 14.♗:f4 f6 15.e5! White has a dangerous attack i.e. 15...fe 16.♗h5 ♖:f4 17.♗:h7+ ♗f8 18.g3 ♖f6 19.♗g6!) 14.♗h5 (If 14.e5 de 15.♗h5, then 15...♗:h5 16.♗:h5 f5 17.♖:f5 ♗:f5 18.♗:f5 ♖:f5 19.♗:f5 ♗f6 looks preferable for Black.) 14...♗g4 15.♗f4 g6 16.♗g3 ♗e5 Black has a reliable position".

I would like to add something to the comments of the grandmaster. In the first line, instead of 14.♗h1 White could try 14.h4 gh 15.g4 with complicated position, but Black, if he likes so, can avoid this playing 13...♗h3 first.

12.f3 ♗g6 13.g3 ♗d7 14.♗e3 h6 15.♗h1 White is not in a hurry and is methodically preparing his king side advance. Black is forced just to be the witness to his opponent's actions, since he doesn't have any active counterplay. **15...♗f6 16.♗c2 ♗e7 17.♖g2 ♖ae8.** It is interesting to try to place on "e8" the other rook to be able to have the option to run with the king to the queen side in some lines. **18.♖af1 ♗h7 19.♗b1.** The threat against the "b7" pawn is futile. White is ready to bring the queen to the area of actions. **19...♗g5 20.h4 ♗h7 21.♖f2**



Diagram 105

Both players have regrouped the forces on the king side. White is in the stage of the final preparation for the decisive onslaught. Black is left in anticipation of the attack **21...♙c8 22.♙d2 ♖d8 23.♞h2 ♗f6**. In case of 23...♗e7 to be able to meet 24.f4 with 24...f5!, White wouldn't have pushed the

"f" pawn, but would have played 24.g4!.

24.f4! ♙g4! Black tries to mechanically stop the white pawns. 24...ef 25.gf ♗:h4 was not effective because of 26.e5. **25.♗f1 ♖d8 26.f5 ♗e7 27.♗c1 ♗h8 28.♙e2 ♗f6 29.♗d1**. The straightforward 29.♗d3 h5 30.♗f2 would solve the problem much quicker i.e. 30...♗eg8 31.♙:g4 ♗:g4 32.♗:g4 hg 33.♗e2 ♗f6 34.♙g5 winning the "g4" pawn.

29...♙:e2. On 29...h5 White intended to play 30.♙g5 ♙:e2 31.♗:e2 ♗g4 32.♗d3 f6 33.♙d2 ♗g8 34.♗f2 ♗:f2+ 35.♗:f2 and Black fails to defend the "h5" pawn with the rook.

30.♗:e2 h5 31.♙g5? White plays similarly to the previous variation, but the situation is entirely different. It is the queen on e2, and not the rook and because of that Black has enough time to consolidate. The right way was to play simply 31.♗d3 ♗g4 32.♞hg2 and ♗d3 – f2 next.

31...♗g4 32.♞hg2 ♗a5? Black makes a mistake now. Playing 32...f6! 33.♙d2 ♗g8! 34.♗d3 ♗f7 35.♗f2 ♗:f2+ 36.♙:f2 ♞h8 37.g4 hg 38.♗:g4 ♞eg8 Black could refute the previous strategy of White, which was perfect up to now. **33.♗d3** – finally. **33...♗g8 34.♗f2 ♗g6 35.♙:f6 ♗:f6 36.g4**



Diagram 106

Black's position is hopeless. He has no defence against the king side attack. **36... ♖:c3.** **36...hg** **37. ♖:g4 ♖h5** wouldn't help because of **38. ♖:e5 ♖f4** **39. ♖g4.**

37.g5 ♖h7 **38. ♖:h5 g6** **39. ♖e2! ♖:a3** **40. ♖g3 ♖a4** **41.h5.** The game was adjourned here, but didn't last

too long when they resumed: **41... ♖g8** **42.f6 ♖b8** **43. ♖g4 ♖c2** **44.hg ♖:g6** **45. ♖3g2 ♖:f6** (45... ♖:g5 wouldn't change much after **46. ♖:g5 ♖:g5** **47. ♖h2+ ♖h7** **48. ♖g7**) **46.gf ♖:g4** **47. ♖h2+** Black resigned.

Shereshevsky – Anikaev, Cheljabinsk 1974



Diagram 107

White played **10.d5?!** immediately in the diagrammed position, without being afraid of **10...e4** **11.dc ed** **12.cb.** The well-tested in practice **10.e4** is better. **10... ♖a5!?** **11.e4?!** Now Black can transpose into the line recommended by Boleslavsky in his comments to the previous game. In fact, if

White had chosen this rather unnatural order of moves, he would have had to continue to play originally with **11. ♖g3!**

11... ♖e8?. Anikaev plays passively and gives White enough time to take up the initiative. **11... ♖h5!** was the right move. **12. ♖g3 ♖h4** **13. ♖a2! ♖f6** **14. ♖h1!** With this excellent move White prevents any attempt by the opponent for some

activity and forces him to rely only on passive defence.
14...♖d7 15.g3 ♜e7 16.f4 f6 17.f5 ♖f7 18.♖g2 ♗f8. Black has nothing better than to begin to run with his king to the queen side. Black is strategically lost. **19.g4 h6 20.h4 ♗e8 21.g5 hg 22.hg ♗d8 23.♖f3 ♗c7 24.♖h3 fg 25.♗:g5 ♖f6 26.♖h8 ♖b8 27.♗h5! ♗d7 28.♖:b8 ♗:b8**



Diagram 108

The previous game did not require any particular explanation. White was playing for a king side advance, while Black was trying to coordinate his pieces and evacuate his king. In the diagrammed position White has to make up his mind how to turn his big positional advantage into a win.

One way to do this is to retreat the queen to "h4", then bring the knight to "g3", the bishop to "e2" and then try to reach for the Black's "g7" pawn. I decided to go for something sharper but chose the wrong way to do it. **29.♗:f6?** White calculated the following line: 29...♗h8+ ♖f8 31.♖g8 ♖:g8 32.♗:g8+ ♗c7 33.♖f2 and next the knight goes to "g4", the queen to "h8" and the "f6" pawn falls. The idea is not bad at all but I had to start with the queen check first: 29.♗h8+! ♖f8 30.♗:f6! and the idea will be realized in practice. Evidently, Black would have to play 29...♗e8 (29...♗c7 30.♗h4) 30.♗:e8+ ♖:e8 (30...♗:e8 31.♗:f6 gf 32.♖g8 ♖e7 33.♖f8), but after 31.♗h4 Black will have problems to draw. White has a lot of ways to improve his position: the manoeuvre with the rook to "g6", the knight can go to "g5" via f2 and h3, the bishop can go to "h5" and Black can not even retreat with the knight to "f6", since after its exchange Black will lose a pawn. I thought

during the game that with the exchange 29.♔:f6 I narrow Black's scope of choice but it turned out just the opposite.

29...g7 30.♖h8+ ♘c7! I underestimated this move. It might seem strange now, but Black manages to hold the "f6" pawn and consequently the position. The rest of the game was played in a mutual time-trouble. 31.♗f2 ♖h7! 32.♖g8 ♕e8 33.♗g4 ♖f7 34.♖h8 ♖f8 35.♖h4 b6 36.♗e3 ♗b7 37.♕e2 ♗d8 38.♖h6 ♗f7 39.♖h7 ♘d8 40.♖g7 ♖h8 41.♖g6 ♖h6 42.♖g3 ♖h8 White was already convinced that his advantage was gone and after 43.♖g8 I offered a draw, which was accepted.

Shereshevsky – Korelov **Minsk 1972**

10.e4 ♖e8?! A very strange move. Black is preparing to meet the pawn advance f2 – f4, but agrees voluntarily to a passive position.

11.d5 ♗e7 12.f3. The beginning of a king side attack. In principle it is a one-sided affair already. Black has no counterplay against the "c4" pawn, while on the king side White is the complete master of the situation. 12...h6 13.♕e3 ♗g6 14.♘h1 ♖e7 15.♖c2 ♖e8 16.a4 a5 17.g3 ♗f8 18.♖g1 ♗8d7



Diagram 109

Black is well prepared against f3 – f4, but White is not obliged to make a breakthrough in the best defended section of the board. Now White changes the target.

19.g4! ♗h7 20.♗g3 ♗b6 21.♗f5 ♕:f5 22.gf. The pawn structure has changed. White has at his disposal the semi-

open "g" file, but the direct attack on the "g7" target is not enough to win the game. The position should be opened to give some scope for the bishops and that is only possible with the help of f3 – f4. Presently White starts to manoeuvre with the purpose to worsen Black's coordination of pieces.

22... ♖h8 23. ♖ab1 ♗c8. 23... ♗:h4? would be a blunder because of 24. ♖b5.

24. ♖g3 f6 25. ♖g2 ♖f7 26. ♖g1 ♗b6 27. ♖b1 ♗c8 28. ♗e2 ♖b8 29. ♖b5 ♖a8 30. ♖b1 ♖b8. It is very useful to create the illusion of safety for the opponent. With those slow manoeuvres White is disguising his plan. The board is full of pieces, and it is not easy for White to secure the defence of the "e4" pawn after the opening of the "e" file. Amazingly, the White king is going to accomplish this.

31. ♗g1! ♖a8 32. ♗f2 ♖f6?! ♖g1! Black played rather carelessly taking away the rook from the 8th rank. Now, to parry the threat 34. ♗:h6 Black has to move away the knight from the "h7" square.

33... ♗f8 34. ♖h3! It becomes clear now that Black is defenceless against the threat 35. ♖:g7. **34... ♗h7**



Diagram 110

35. ♖g2! White decides not to win the enemy queen after having frightened the opponent reasonably. After 35. ♖:g7 ♖:g7 36. ♖:g7 ♖:g7 37. ♗:h6 ♖g8 38. ♖h5 Black has the opportunity to prevent the penetration of the enemy queen with 37...b6! 38. ♖f7 ♖a7!

Therefore I decided to continue

with my plan without changing the material ratio.

35... ♖f8 36.f4! Under the circumstances this move is very useful, since the bishop on "e2" enters the struggle with a decisive effect.

36... ♖b6 37.fe fe 38.♗c1! The white square bishop's operation should be well prepared first. **38... ♖b1 39.♗e3!** The king should not remain on one and the same rank with the queen.

39... ♖b6 40.♗d3! The last preparations. **40... ♖:a4 41.♗h5!** A nice finish to the White's strategy. **41... ♖:c1** – desperation. If **41... ♗f6 42.♗a2** is the simplest.

42.♗:f7 ♖:c3+ 43.♗d2 ♖:g3 44.♗:g3 ♖:f7 45.♗b3 Black resigned.

Shereshevsky – Kupreichik Minsk 1973

The order of moves in this game was the following: **1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♗b4 4.e3 c5 5.a3?! ♗:c3 6.bc ♖c6?! 7.♗d3 d6 8.♗e2 e5 9.0-0 h6 10.♗g3 0-0 11.d5! ♖a5?!.** You have to be convinced by now that the retreat to "e7" leads to a very passive position., but the move in the game is even worse. Black's attack on the "c4" pawn does not bring any success and the knight on "a5" is away from the main theatre of action – the king side. **12.e4 ♖e8 13.h3.** White prepares f2 – f4. **13... ♗d7 14.♖a2 ♖f8?!** Black's position is already difficult and it is not easy at all to give him any good advice. White is patiently improving the position preparing the advance f2 – f4. White can also play f2 – f3, ♖af2 and after that f3 – f4. If **14... ♖b6** then **15.♗f5** is rather unpleasant, and in case of **14... ♖b6 15.f4** and White's initiative transforms into a decisive attack against the enemy king. The idea of Kupreichik to finish his development, preserving the control over "e5" is easy understandable, but it meets an original tactical refutation.

15.f4 ef 16.♗:f4 ♗g6 17.♖af2 ♗:f4 18.♖:f4 f6.



Diagram 111

19.e5! The decisive blow.
19...de?! This move allows a very beautiful combination, but even after 19...**e:e5** 20.**Ac2** followed by 21.**Wd3** Black can hardly avoid the loss of the game.

20.E:f6! gf 21.**W:h5** Black has an extra rook, but all the White pieces are taking part in the

slaughter of the king. The crush is unavoidable. **21...Wf8**
22.W:h6+ W:e7 23.**W:g7+** Black resigned.

I included the following game in this book to illustrate the first try to play the Saemish system with White at the level of master's candidate.

Zazhoghine – Bladikis

Liepaja 1990

1.d4 Wf6 2.**c4 e6** 3.**Wc3 Ab4** 4.**e3 c5** 5.**a3?!** **Ac3** 6.**bc** 0-0?!
7.Ad3 d6 8.**e4 e5** 9.**d5**. That is an interesting idea, since White blocks the center before black's knight could go to "c6".
9...h6 10.**W:e2 Ag4?** Black goes with the bishop to "g6" but it has no perspectives there.
11.f3 Ah5 12.**Ea2 Wbd7** 13.**Le3 Ag6** 14.**0-0 Wa5** 15.**Wb1?!** White wants to try to use the weaknesses of the opponent on the king side. This would probably be a good idea, but there was no need to allow Black's queen control over the "a4" square. It would have been much more logical to play 15.**Wb3** or 15.**a4**.

15...W:c8 16.**g3?** Why not 16.**a4?** 16...**a6?** Black does not utilize the wonderful chance to start his counterplay on the queen side with 16...**Wa4**, and weakens his position on the same side of the board.

17.a4 Wc7 18.**Eb2 Eab8** 19.**h3**. White begins now to prepare some active operations on the king side. He plans to

push f3 – f4 but deprives first the enemy knight from the “g4” square. 19...Ee8 20.♖a2. Zazhoghine plans to manoeuvre the knight from “e2” to “d2” and defends the “a4” pawn first.

20...b6 21.♖fb1 ♖b7 22.♖b3 ♖eb8 23.♖d1 ♖c8 24.♗c1 ♗e8 25.♗h2 ♗df6 26.♗b3 ♖d7 27.♗d2 ♖e7 28.♖e2 ♗d7 29.♖g2.



Diagram 112

Black has been outplayed completely. White has prepared the pawn advance f3– f4 and is ready to start the king side attack. 29...♗c7? Black intends to evacuate his king to the queen side but overlooks the hidden threat of the opponent. 29...a5 was a must.

30.♗b3! This unexpected move of the white knight disorganizes Black’s defence on the queen side completely. There is no defence against 31.♗a5!

30...♖a7 31.♗a5 ♖a 32.♖:b8+ ♗:b8 33.♖b8+ ♗h7 34.♖b2 ♗a8 35.♖b1 f6 36.f4 Black’s rook and knight look really ridiculous, so Zazhoghine starts an energetic king side offensive. 36...♗e8 37.♗c2 ♗g6 38.g4 ♗e8 39.♗g2 ♗g6 40.h4 ♗f7 41.♗d2 g6 42.g5 ef 43.♗:f4 ♖d7 44.gf! ♖g4+ 45.♗g3 ♖e2+ 46.♗h3 ♗c7 47.♖d1 ♖:c4 48.♖f3 ♖a2 49.♗b3 ♖b2 50.♗:d6 ♗e8 51.♗:c5 ♖d7 52.♗d4 ♗d6 53.♖f4 ♖e2 54.♖:h6+! Black resigns.

I am going to finish this chapter with the game:

Capablanca – Ragozin

Moscow 1936

1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♖b4 4.a3 ♗:c3+ 5.bc d6 6.♖c2 0-0 7.e4 e5 8.♗d3 c5 9.♗e2 ♗c6 10.d5 ♗e7 11.f3. Well, I don’t feel like discussing the opening stage of this game.

since some of the moves of the opponents are not going to withstand any critics. We are interested in the typical position and in the method of playing it, as shown by the great Cuban. **11...♖d7?** It was much better to retreat with the knight to "e8", preparing f7 – f5. In this case White would have probably hampered opponent's intentions with 12.♗g3 (12.g4 ?! ♗g6) and if 12...g6 13.♙h6 ♗g7 14.0-0 f5 15.f4 hoping to preserve the advantage in the sharp pawn clash in the centre. Black had to comply with this development since after the move in the game he looks completely outplayed in a very passive position.



Diagram 113

12.h4!? T. Petrosian would have never played such a move, but Capablanca decided not to push the "g" pawn twice, and he decided to occupy the "h4" square with a pawn, before Black had managed to play ♗e7 – g6.

12...♗b6 13.g4 f6 14.♗g3 ♗f7. Black lost the opening

dispute, so Ragozin was trying to evacuate his king to a safer place. **15.g5 ♗g8 16.f4! ♗e8 17.f5.** Capablanca blocked the position on the king side, gained a lot of space and had everything at his disposal now.

17...♗e7 18.♗g2! White intends to put his knight right in the centre of the enemy camp – the "e6" square. 18...♗d8. The attempt to prevent the move 19.♗h5 with 18...g6 was just provoking the crisis. In their book "Caissa's Favourites" L. Prins and M. Euwe give the following variations: 18...g6 19.fg hg 20.h5! and now:

- ♦ A. 20...gh 21.♗:h5 f5 22.ef ♙:f5 23.♗f6+!

- ♦ B. 20...♖h7 21.♔f5 ♕d7 22.hg ♖:g6 23.♖h3 ♔c7 24.♖h7+
- ♦ C. 20...fg 21.hg ♖f6 22.♔f5 ♖:g6 23.♖:g5 ♖:g5 24.♔:g5 ♔:f5 25.ef and so on.

19.♔h5 ♔c7 20.gf gf 21.♔g7 ♔d7 22.h5 ♖ac8 23.h6 ♔b8 24.♖g1 ♖f7. White has created a wonderful outpost on "g7" and has a decisive advantage on the king side. Now it would be very useful to "shatter" the enemy position on the other side of the board.

25.♖b1 ♖f8 26.♔e2 ♔a8 27.♔h5 ♖e7 28.♖a2 ♖d8 29.♔d2 ♔a4 30.♖b3 ♔b6. If 30...♖b8 White had this amusing line: 31.♔e6 ♖b6 32.♖:b6 ab 33.♔c7+ ♔a7 34.♔b5+ ♔:b5 35.cb and the knight on "a4" will be an easy prey for the white bishop on "h5".



Diagram 114

31.a4! "Capablanca deserves a real admiration for this beautiful knight manoeuvre ending with ♔g7. Of course, we already know the ripe fruit will fall to the ground, but we don't know yet when and how. The move in the game is a wonderful finish to the work done up to now but even after

31.♔e2 White's win is not going to run anywhere. In fact White threatens 32.a5, and if Black takes (31...♔:a4) 32.♖a2 is going to follow – 32...♔d7 (otherwise ♖:b6) 33.♔e6 ♔:e6 34.de and ♔f7" (Prins and Euwe)

31...♖b8 32.a5 ♔c8 If 32...♔a4 then 33.♔e6. **33.♖a2 ♖f8 34.♔e3 b6 35.a6 ♖d8 36.♔d2.** The white king in this game resembles a soccer goalkeeper who is constantly attacking the opponents goal. Capablanca took pity on his own goalkeeper and let him "touch" the ball

36... ♗f8 37. ♖b2 ♗d8 38. ♗b1 b5. Ragozin evidently got sick with watching the final regrouping of the white pieces and decided to do something. Well, this try is basically just a demonstration of futility.

39. cb ♖b6 40. ♗a2 c4 41. ♗a3 ♗c7 42. ♗c1 ♖f8 43. ♖bg2 ♗b8 44. ♗b4 ♖d8 45. ♖g3 ♖f8 46. ♖e6!



Diagram 115

The "sword of Damocles" that had been hanging above Black for about 25 moves finally struck the target. Black has to exchange this knight, because if he plays 46... ♖c8, White can make a waiting move and it becomes clear that Black is in zugzwang. 46... ♗e6 47. de ♖c7 48. ♗:d6 ♖e7 49. ♖d1 Black resigned.

The King's Indian Defence

Black, in this opening is voluntarily giving up the centre, contrary to the Queen's Gambit or the Nimzovitch defence, with the idea to attack it afterwards on the dark squares. It is much more risky in comparison with the Queen's Gambit, but on the other hand it is easier to seize the initiative as early as the opening stage. The numerous strategical options, the possibilities to obtain different pawn structures and the constant fight for the initiative which often turns into a king side attack against the white king make this opening a very dangerous weapon. Up to now, all the tries to refute the King's Indian defence were futile. A convincing proof of that is the fact that this opening has been constantly used by the

world champion Kasparov in his last match for the world title in 1990 against A. Karpov.

Most of my pupils and me as well, we prefer to fight against this opening with the Averbach system. I was very much attracted sometime ago by the following strategical idea:

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 ♙g7 4.e4 d6 5.♙e2 0-0 6.♙g5!?
h6 7.♙e3 e5 8.d5 a5?! 9.h4!? ♗a6? **10.h5 g5 11.g4! ♗c5**
12.f3



Diagram 116

and Black's position is almost lost. White is going to bring the knight to "f2", via "h3", then castle short, then continue the knight manoeuvre ♗f2 – h1 – g3 and later start on the pawn advance on the queen side. The only thing that Black can do is just to watch the development of the events and await opponent's mistakes.

Well, nowadays you can hardly rely on moves like 8...a5? and 9...♗a6? but at the beginning of the 80es White managed often to realize this plan. Still I think that even if Black plays perfectly White has some chances to get some advantage after the opening. For example: **8...♗bd7** (In case of 8...c6, Black has to exchange afterwards on "d5" and after the exchange of the "c" pawns, White has the easy task to seize the initiative on the queen side, bringing the knight to "c4". Therefore White should not necessarily play aggressively on the king side but can play calmly.) **9.♙d2 cd 10.cd h5 11.h3 ♗a6 12.♗f3 ♙d7 13.0-0 ♗h7 14.♗g5 ♗:g5 15.♙:g5 ♙f6 16.♙e3 ♗c7 17.a4 ♙e7 18.♗b5 ♗:b5 19.ab ♙fc8 20.♙a3 ♙g7 21.♙:a7 f5 22.f3 ♙e8 23.♙d3 ♙h6 24.♙f2** and White gradually won this position. Tukmakov – Lerner, Odessa 1989)

9.♙d2 The risky play on the king side is hardly advisable here. In case of **9.g4 ♗c5 10.f3 a5 (10...h5!?** **11.h4 h5!** Black

takes advantage of the fact that the white pawn on "f3" has closed the diagonal "d1 – h5", and starts counterplay on the king side, and after 9.h4 ♖c5 10.♗c2 Black can play actively i.e. 10...c6!? 11.h5 cd 12.cd ♗d7 ! 13.hg fg 14.♗:h6 ♗:h6 15.♗:h6 ♖g7 16.♗h1 ♗c8 with an excellent compensation for the pawn. **9...♖c5 10.f3**



Diagram 117

10...a5 looks very logical in this position, since White can not take on "h6", because of the tactical trick 11...♖f:e4 and 12...♗h4+, but sometimes Black plays 10...♖h5. White can better resume the threat on the "h6" pawn with 11.g3 and after 11...♗h7 play 12.0-0-0. What can Black do now? 12...f5? is bad because 13.♗:c5 dc 14.ef gf 15.f4. On the other hand Black should have in mind the eventual threat b2 – b4. Therefore – 12...a5, but now White begins some energetic actions 13.♗:c5! dc 14.f4 ♖f6 15.♖f3 ♖d7 (15...♖g4 didn't promise Black anything after 16.♗df1).



Diagram 118

The game Shereshevskij – Mariasin, Minsk 1983 reached this position. White played 16.f5?! and Black managed to hold the position. P. Korzubov – one of my students, pointed out after the game that White should have played 16.h4! The threat is 17.h5, and Black can not play 16...h5 17.♖g5+ ♖g8 18.♖e6!

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At the international tournament in Copenhagen in Denmark in 1984, Kristiansen played against Korzubov 12...♖e8 instead of 12...a5. Black takes control over the "a4" square in case of 13.b4 and indirectly defends the knight on "h5", preparing f7 – f5. White however, managed to show the drawbacks of Black's manoeuvre with 13.♙c5! dc 16.d6! cd 14.♚d6



Diagram 119

It became clear that Black's pieces on the king side had no play and the queen side was very vulnerable. Well, this game was played in the last round and Korzubov needed only a draw to fulfil his second IM norm so he accepted a draw, although he had an overwhelming advantage.

Lets go back to the move **10...a5. 11.0-0-0**. White resumed the threat to take the "h6" pawn. Black's choice is restricted to 11...♖h7 or 11...h5. After **11...♖h7 12.g4** Black has to play h6 – h5 anyway, so it would be better to do it immediately – **12...h5**. If not, White is going to play 13.h4 and then make up a plan including h4 – h5 after some preparation bringing the king to the king side (after g6 – g5) and then open files on the queen side after an appropriate preparation.



Diagram 120

13.♘h3! hg 14.♘g5+ ♗g8 15.♗dg1

Some of my pupils have already reached this position and White has all the chances to develop a dangerous attack. It is bad for Black to take on "f3" since after 16.♙f3 Black has nothing against the winning

march of White's "h" pawn. The best line for Black probably is to try to neutralize the initiative of the opponent with 15...♖h5 16.fg ♖f4 but after 17.h4! with ♖h3 next Black has to defend a difficult position anyway.

Lets have a look now at **11...h5** immediately. White must prepare the development of the knight on "g1". Therefore **16.h4 ♖h7**. The rest of the moves facilitate White's initiative. **13.♖h3**.



Diagram 121

How should Black play now? 13...♗h4? is bad after 14.♖g5 ♗g3 15.♙f1! ♖:g5 16.♙:g5 ♖h7 17.♙e3! with the irresistible threat 18.♖e2. 13...f5 is also insufficient after 14.ef gf 15.f4 and the pawn "h5" is very weak. What should White do after 13...♙h3!? 14.♙:h3 f5. We couldn't find the right answer to

this question for a long time. 15.ef gf 16.f4 ef 17.♙:f4 ♖f6 looks very unclear. But lets try "Korzubov's patent" 16.♙:c5 ! (instead of 16.f4 in the last variation) 16...dc 17.d6! and White's advantage is out of doubt.

Black however, is not at all obliged to determine the situation in the centre immediately with moves like 6...h6 and 7...e5 in the Averbach system. Black can choose a lot of other lines like : 6...♖bd7 7.♗d2 c6 8.♖f3 e5, 8...d5, 8...a6 and b7 – b5 next and finally 6...♖a6 with the idea to play after 7.♗d2 – 7...e5 8.♖f3 ♗e8 and now in comparison with the position when black's knight is on "d7" and not on "a6", White is deprived of the dangerous pawn sacrifice 9.0-0!? ed 10.♖:d4 ♖:e4 11.♖:e4 ♗:e4 12.♖b5 ♗c6 13.♙f3 ♗:c4 14.a4 c6 15.♖:d6 ♗e6 16.♙ad1!, since the knight on "a6" defends the "c7" square.

Besides all that, Black has another principally different scheme of playing connected with the move c7 – c5. After 6.♗g5 c5 7.d5 h6 8.♗f4 e6 interesting complications may arise. A long time ago I tried to convince grandmaster Boleslavsky that White has a clear advantage and we had a funny dialogue – something like this: "Well, Issak Efremovitch, it looks like the King's Indian defence is losing ? " – "You must be kidding." Finally Boleslavsky managed to convince me that to try to find a refutation of this opening is simply a waste of time, besides nowadays the evaluation of the variation 6...h6 7.♗e3 c5 8.e5 is rather unclear.

In short, the Averbach system requires from the white player not only an excellent theoretical preparation, but also a constant watch over the contemporary tournament practice. White also needs to deeply understand the problematics of the arising positions which is cultivated only in chess players who are permanently watching over the dynamics of the development of this system.

Lately I began to notice that no matter how seriously and devotedly I was trying to explain the Averbach system to the young players who started working with me – the probability for them to make grave blunders both strategical as well as sometimes tactical in many sharp lines is very great. Evidently, this is because the flow of chess information is almost drowning everybody and the methods of fight in the numerous pawn structures that may arise in the system are also multiple. Those mistakes, depending on the capabilities and the endeavours of the chess player frequent in a period from half an year to an year. There were no exceptions in my practice as a coach. Afterwards everything begins to fit and the Averbach system becomes a dangerous weapon against the King's Indian defence.

Well, to make mistakes for an year and to have mediocre tournament results is something that not everybody can

afford. Therefore another question arises: "How to master some other system against the King's Indian defence with an interesting strategical contents which needs a lesser flow of information to work on?" To solve problems like this is something that the good coach should always approach with responsibility. At first you could prepare some "novelty" and then you may work on some other different lines of the chosen variation. I would advise you to avoid lines that are currently top-fashion. I have chosen Petrosian's system. In 1988 I participated in an international tournament in Primorsko in Bulgaria and I noticed the intriguing game between the Soviet masters I. Henkin and E. Gleizerov:

1.d4 ♖f6 **2.c4** g6 **3.♗c3** ♕g7 **4.e4** d6 **5.♗f3** 0-0 **6.♗e2** e5 **7.d5** ♖bd7 **8.♗g5** h6 **9.♗h4** g5 **10.♗g3** ♗h5 **11.h4** g4 **12.♗d2** f5 **13.ef** ♗df6 **14.♗:g4** ♗:g3 **15.fg** ♗:g4 **16.♖:g4** ♗:f5 **17.♖e2** e4 **18.0-0** ♖d7 **19.♖e3** c5 **20.dc** bc **21.♗b3** c5 **22.♗ad1** ♖e6 **23.♗d5**. Until now, the opponents were repeating the game Hort – Vogt, Leipzig 1973, in which Black played 23...♗ab8 and after 24.♗d2 ♗h7 25.♗f4 ♖:c4 26.♗:d6 ♗bd8 27.♗c6! ♖c2 28.♗c5 ♖:b2 29.♗c7 White had an advantage and managed to win. Grandmaster V. Hort annotated the game for the "Chess Informant" 16, and recommended for Black 23...♗ad8, instead of



Diagram 122

23...♗ad8. Gleizerov decided to follow Hort's recommendation, and look what happened – **24.♗d2 ♗d7**

25.♗a5! A wonderful move. White is not afraid of 25...♗d4 because after 26.♗:d4 cd 27.♖:d4 he has more than sufficient compensation for the exchange and is ready by

means of b2 –b4 to disrupt the enemy control over the “d4” square. 25... ♖h7 26. ♖c6! Another original and very strong move.

26... ♗df7 27. b4 cb 28. ♗df2! ♕g6 29. ♗:f7 ♗:f7 30. ♗:f7 ♗:f7 31. ♖c:b4 It is time to count the chicken... White has an extra pawn with an excellent position. Black's bishops have no future while the white knights look impressive. Additionally the position of the white king is much safer than that of his counterpart. The realization of the advantage was very energetic.

31... ♗b7 32. g4! ♖h8. If 32...a5, then 33. h5.

33. ♗f4 ! ♗f7 Here 33...a5 was not good once again because of 34. ♗:d6. 34. ♗:d6! ♕d4+ 35. ♖h2 ♗f2 36. ♖h3 ♕h7 37. ♖c6 ♕a1 38. ♗:h6 ♗f1 39. ♖f4. Black resigned.

This game impressed the unfortunate Gleizerov so much that he decided to give up the King's Indian defence altogether and started playing the Nimzo–indian defence.

There is another interesting game, I would like to turn your attention to, between Henkin and Yurtaev, played in 1989 in Podolsk.

Henkin – Yurtaev

1. d4 ♖f6 2. c4 g6 3. ♖c3 ♕g7 4. e4 d6 5. ♖f3 0-0 6. ♕e2 e5 7. d5 ♖a6 8. ♕g5 h6 9. ♕h4 g5 10. ♕g3 ♖h5 11. h4 ♖f4 12. hg hg 13. ♖f1! The Encyclopedia of the chess openings mentions only 13. ♗c2. 13...f5. Henkin commented this game in the book “Shakhmati in USSR” № 5 for 1990 and said that after 13...♖:e2 14. ♗:e2 f5 15. ef ♕:f5 16. ♖e4 g4 17. ♖fg5! Black had a bad position.

14. ♕:f4! The essence of White's idea. Changing on “f5” would not be so effective because of 14. ef ♕:f5 15. ♕:f4 ef 16. ♖d4 ♕:d4 17. ♗:d4 ♗f6 18. ♗:f6 ♗:f6 19. ♗h5 ♗g6.

14...ef Henkin considers that 14...gf is the lesser evil i.e. 15.♠d3 ♘c5 16.♠c2 although White is obviously better as well. White played worse in the game Balashov – Borodianskij, USSR 1965 – 15.♘h4 instead of 15.♠d3 The game continued 15...♘c5 16.♖c2 ♖g5 and Black had a good position, but the Black knight was developed at “d7” previously.

15.♘d4 ♖f6. In this position the exchange on “d4” is not satisfactory anymore i.e. 15...♠:d4 16.♖:d4 ♖f6 17.♖:f6 ♖:f6 18.♖h5 ♖g6 19.♠d3! fe (otherwise 20.ef) 20.♠:e4 ♖g7 21.f3 followed by ♖f2 next and occupation of the “h” file. Very beautiful variations were shown by Henkin after 15...fe. For example 16.♘:e4 ♖e7 17.♘e6! ♠:e6 18.de ♖:e6 19.♘g5 ♖f5 20.c5!!, and if 20...♖:g5 then 21.♠c4+! ♖f7 22.♠:f7+ ♖f7 23.♖f3+ and ♖:b7, and if 20...d5 will be followed by 21.c6.

16.♘:f5 ♠:f5 17.ef ♘c5 18.♠h5! ♖:f5 19.♠g4 ♖g6 20.♘a4!



Diagram 123

20...♠f6?! After this White’s attack develops without any problems. 20...♠e5 was necessary to be able to blockade the passed “d” pawn by means of 21.♘:c5 dc 22.♖e2 – 22...♠d6, although Black will be away from having his problems solved. 23.♠d7 is also possible with the idea to go to

“c2” with this bishop.

21.♘:c5 dc 22.d6! c6 23.♖b3 ♠d4 24.d7! White deprives Black’s rooks from the “e8” square which is totally disorganizing Black’s defence. The game continued :

24...♖ad8 25.♗e1 f3 26.gf ♖f4 27.♗e7 ♗b1+ 28.♔g2 ♗g6.
 If 28...♗:b2 29.♗:b2 ♕:b2 30.♗e8+ ♖f8 31.♗:d8 ♗:d8 then
 32.♖b1 ♕c3 33.♗:b7 a5 34.♖b6 with a decisive advantage.

29.♕h5! ♗d6 30.♗e8+ ♖f8 31.♗:d8 ♗:d8 32.♕e8!
 ♗f6 33.♗c2 ♔f8 34.♖h7 ♔g8 35.♗e4! ♕:b2 36.♗e7
 ♔f8 37.♗e6! ♗f4 38.♗h7 ♕g7 39.♕h5! Black
 resigned.

These two games comprise a good illustration for White's opportunities in the sharpest and the most principal line of the Petrosian system. These games are a nice starting point to analyse further, although you can try to study some other calmer schemes.

First of all you have to find your way in positions with the Black "c" pawn – already to "c5". There is a small but very instructive book "Chess Lectures" by master E. Shehtman, which was published by the "Phizcultura and Sports"-publishing house in 1989. The author is familiarizing us with Petrosian's legacy and in a chapter devoted to the Petrosian's system against the King's Indian you can find a peculiar comparison between these two positions :



Diagram 124



Diagram 125

And now the world champion №9 – Petrosian, explained wisely the fine points: "The basic difference between these two diagrams is that in the first one the "c5" square has been

occupied by a pawn, while on the second one it is free. The difference is enormous. The tournament practice of the King's Indian defence has shown that in the first case the black pawn on "c5" represents a buffer against the pawn advance of White on the queen side and helps the creation of counterplay on the king side.

On the second diagram, the Black knight finds a relatively safe haven on "c5", with the help of the "a5" pawn and together with the bishop on "g7" become the main actors of the arising chess spectacle."

Well, my own impressions with playing the white side of the King's Indian defence tell me that in the positions of the first type, white should be very careful when Black manages to play f7 – f5, since the standard manoeuvre e4: f5 – g6:f5, and then f2 – f4 is not so favourable for White in comparison with the case when the black pawn is already on "e4" and the "c5" square is vacant.



Diagram 126



Diagram 127

Therefore White has to refrain from the exchange on "f5" rather often, allowing Black's "f" pawn to advance to "f4" which creates prerequisites for a king side attack.

I am going to show you some games now which illustrate the method of White's play in such type of positions.

**Petrosian – Pilnik
Amsterdam 1956**

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e5 4.♗c3 d6 5.e4 g6 6.♗f3 ♕g7
7.♗g5 ♖a6 8.♗e2 ♗c7 9.♗d2 ♗d7 10.a4 b6 11.♗b5!?
♗:b5? A grave positional mistake, after which Black has a
strategically lost position. 11...♗c8 was a must. 12.cb 0-0



Diagram 128

13.b4! White is immediately on the road to the realization of his advantage. After the exchange on "c5", no matter which pawn Black captures with, it will be very unfavourable for Black positionally. On the other hand it is not good for Black to take on "b4", since the white rook will have an excellent

point for penetration – "c6".

13...h6 14.♗:f6! Of course, White wouldn't like to allow the enemy knight to enjoy the "c5" outpost.

14...♗:f6 15.0-0 ♖fd8 16.♗c4 ♗f8 17.g3 cb. The Argentinian grandmaster decided to simplify. Well, White had a much wider choice of moves than his opponent and Black didn't like to be under constant tension in connection with the exchange on "c5".

18.♗b3 ♗g7 19.♖fc1! Petrosian is on the alert against his opponent's future counterplay. Black would have some tactical chances after 19.♗:b4?! – 19...♗e6!.

19...h5 20.♗e3 ♗e8 21.♗:b4 ♖dc8 22.♖c6 ♗d8 23.♖ac1 ♗f6 24.♗f1. The Black knight should not be allowed to the "c5" square, at any rate.

24...♖cb8 25.♗h3 a6



Diagram 129

White has outplayed his opponent completely, but Black found somehow a way to play something active. What should White do next? Dear reader, can you try to find the magnificent move played by Petrosian?

26. Be1!! "This move, which is very difficult to understand at

first is played because of the following considerations. Black has weakened the pawn "b6" so to attack it White should put the knight on "c4", but this is not possible to be done immediately because of 26... d:e4. There are a lot of pieces on the board so it is not very easy for White to defend the "e4" pawn. 26.f3 looked very tempting but it has serious drawbacks: the dark squares are weakened as well as the second rank. Black obtains serious counterplay playing 26... ab 27.ab h4. The bishop is too strong on the "h3– c8" diagonal to be delegated the humble task to defend the "e4" pawn. So, what is left is – the move in the game. " – (Petrosian)

26... ab 27.ab d:h7 28. d:c4 Ba2 29. Ag2. The game has been decided on the queen side in favour of White. He has only to neutralize the counterplay of the opponent on the other side of the board.

29... Bf6 30. Bf1 d:g5 31. Bb3 Bba8 32.h4 d:h7 33. B:b6 Ba1 34. Bc6 B8a2 35. B:e3 B:d8 This looks like the end to Black's temporary activity. White is easily winning now.

36. B:a1 B:a1+ 37. d:h2 d:f6 38.f3 Bb8 39. Bb3 d:d7 40.b6 d:c5 41. Bb2 Ba4 42. Bb5 Ba2 43. Bc7 g5 44. d:e3 gh 45. d:f5+ g:g8 46.gh Ba6 47.b7 Ba7 48. Bc8 B:b7 49. B:e8 d:d7 50. d:d6 Black resigned.

Petrosian – Lutikov

Tbilisi 1959

1. f3 f6 2. c4 g6 3. c3 g7 4. e4 0-0 5. d4 d6 6. e2 e5
7. d5 a6 8. g5 h6 9. h4 c5 10. b2 $\text{d7}?! (Petrosian$
mentioned that 10... c7 was better)

11. $\text{b5}!$ e8 . The "lesson" of capturing on "b5" was squeezed dry in the previous game. On the other hand if Black plays 11... e7 , it would be very difficult to avoid the pin and prepare $\text{f7} - \text{f5}$.

12. a3 d7 13. $\text{g4}!$ c7 14. $\text{c3}!$ Naturally, White wouldn't like to simplify the position and to facilitate his opponent to place his pieces on the seriously restricted space for manoeuvres.

14... a6 15. a4 c8



Diagram 130

Black refrained from blocking the queen side in a deadlock with the move $\text{a6} - \text{a5}$. He had this opportunity several more moves and White didn't mind at all. Indeed, after $\text{a6} - \text{a5}$ the theatre of actions would be narrowed, but no doubt White would have the initiative while now Black still had some hopes

to do something on the queen side. The further course of actions in this game proved that the blocking of the queen side was the least of evils for Black.

16. $\text{h3}!$ Typical "Petrosian"! " This humble move is very difficult to find and is definitely worth at least one exclamation mark. White intends to bring the knight to "e3". But in order to do that the "d1" square should be vacated first defending the "g4" pawn in the process. Besides, if Black plays later $\text{f7} - \text{f5}$, after the exchanges on "f5" White would have $\text{e2} - \text{g4}$ at his

disposal. Instead of 16.h3, 16.g5 was also good with the idea of a direct king side attack. " – (Petrosian).

16...♖b8 17.♗c2 ♕d7 18.b3 b6 19.♘d1 b5 20.a5! ♖h8 In case of 20...bc 21.bc ♖b4 Petrosian wanted to change a little bit the route of the knight and bring it to "d3" via "b2" and then if necessary to prepare f2–f4.

21.♕g3 ♘g8 22.♘e3 ♘e7. If Black now exchanges on "c4" and plays 24...♖b4, White can displace this rook with the help of the manoeuvre ♗c3 and ♘c2.

23.♕h4! Petrosian is preparing for a direct clash on the king side but he is not in a hurry to start it, since the position after 23.b4 f5! 24.bc f4! 25.cd fe 26.fe (26.de ed+ 27.♗:d2 ♖f7) 26...♘c:d5 27.ed ♘:d5 is far from clear.



Diagram 131

23...♗e8. "Black plays and behaves as if nothing has happened. Otherwise he would have retreated with the knight to "g8", to which White intended to play 24.0-0 and now if 24...♕f6 then 25.♕:f6 ♘:f6 26.f4! (26.b4 is also good) 26...♗e8 27.f5 g5 28.b4!" (Petrosian).

24.b4! ♘c8 – There is nothing better. As Petrosian mentioned the complications after 24...cb 25.c5! are definitely in favour of White. For example 25...♖c8 (25...dc 26.♗:c5 or 25...♘c8 26.c6) 26.c6 ! ♘:c6 27.dc ♕:c6 and although Black has three pawns for the piece, White is better. **25.bc dc 26.cb ♘:b5 27.♕:b5 ♖:b5?!** Black insists on having equal material but after the last move his position is strategically lost. 27...♕:b5 was very interesting to try to deprive White from castling at the cost of a pawn. **28.0-0 f5 29.f3 ♖f7** A waste of time. 29...h5 deserved attention **30.♘dc4 ♖b4?** Well, Black has a difficult position

but this move is an additional loss of time and loses without a fight.

31.♠e1! ♖b7 32.♙c3 h5 33.gf gf 34.ef e4 35.♗h2 ef
36.♖:f3 ♙d4 37.♗d3 ♙f6 38.♖g1 ♗h7 39.♙:f6 ♖:f6 40.♗c3
♗f8 41.♖g6 ♖f7 42.♖g5 The game was adjourned but Black
resigned without resuming play. The line 42...♗h6 43.♖g6
♗f8 44.♙e5 leaves him no hopes.

Geller – Ljubojevic Petropolis 1973

1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 g6 4.♙c3 ♙g7 5.e4 d6 6.♗f3 0-0
7.♙e2 e5 8.♙g5 h6 9.♙h4 ♗a6 Petrosian made an
interesting comment on the move 9...♗c7 in his "Chess
Lectures": "V. Hug played with Black against Geller something
different several rounds before. He tried 9...♗c7 10.♙d2 ♗h7
11.0-0 ♙f6 offering to exchange the dark square bishops.
Traditionally, it is considered that it is always favourable for
Black to exchange these bishops if the pawn structure in the
centre is blocked. The bishops that are left on the board after
this exchange do not seem equal in value at all. The White
bishop is restricted from the central pawns which are on white
squares as well. So, this reasoning has almost become a
dogma and even Geller in this game avoided the exchange of
the bishops.

That idea has been tried plenty of times before. Remember
the famous game Tal – Fischer, Yugoslavia 1959? Tal was
not burdened with any dogmatic concepts then and he
exchanged the bishops and later managed to prove that
without the dark square bishops the Black king has been left
without a very important defender, and the black position is
not without defects." The game Tal – Fischer proceeded as
follows (although the pawn structure was a little bit different –
the black "c" pawn was on "c7") 1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 g6 3.♙c3 ♙g7
4.e4 d6 5.♙e2 0-0 6.♗f3 e5 7.d5 ♗bd7 8.♙g5 h6 9.♙h4

a6 10.0-0 ♖e8 11.♗d2 ♗h7 12.b4 ♕f6 13.♕:f6 ♗h:f6
 14.♗b3 ♖e7 15.♖d2 ♗h7 16.♖e3 ♗g8 17.c5 f5 18.ef gf 19.f4
 ef 20.♖:f4 dc 21.♕d3 cb 22.♖ae1 ♖f6 23.♖e6 ♖:c3 24.♕:f5+
 ♖:f5 25.♖:f5+ ♗h8 26.♖f3 ♖b2 27.♖e8 ♗f6 28.♖:f6+ ♖:f6
 29.♖:f6 ♗g7 30.♖ff8 ♗e7 31.♗a5 h5 32.h4 ♖b8 33.♗c4 b5
 34.♗e5 Black resigned.

Black obtained a good position in the game Geller – Hug after 12.♕g3?! ♖e7 13.♖c2 ♗d7 14.♖ae1 h5 15.h3 ♕g5 16.♗f3 ♕h6. In his annotations to this game E. Geller recommended 12.♕:f6! ♗:f6 13.a3 (It is necessary to deflect ♗b8 from the "e5" outpost.) 13...♗a6 14.f4 and then for example 14...ef 15.♖:f4 ♖e7 16.♖c2 ♗d7 15.♖af1 ♗e5 18.♗f3. White exchanges the enemy knight in the centre, keeping the advantage.

10.♗d2 ♖e8 11.0-0 ♗h7 12.♗b5! The same knight move disorganizes the coordination of the enemy pieces. **12...♖d7 13.♕g3!** "White would like to play f2 – f4, leaving Black practically no choice. The positional threats f4 – f5 and f4:e5 will force Black to exchange on f4, after which 12.♗b5 will be proved as a very useful move, since the "d6" pawn will be very difficult to defend.

So why didn't White play f4 in many more games?

The point is that in positions with similar pawn structure Black is not afraid of f2 –f4 because when the opponent takes on f4 with a piece, Black usually has an excellent control on the outpost e5. In the King's indian defence Black's knights are usually placed in such a way that the "e5" square is available to them immediately, or in a few moves. In this case however, Black's knights are placed in such a way that the "e5" square is something like a dream ". – (Petrosian).

13...♗c7 14.f4! Some tactical motives. After 14...♗b5 15.cb ef 16.♕:f4 ♕b2 White has an excellent resource 17.♗c4! with an overwhelming advantage. **14...ef 15.♕:f4 ♗e8 16.♗f3 ♖e7**

17. ♖d2 g5 18. ♗g3 ♜hf6 19. ♗d3 ♜h5 20. ♗f2 ♜f4 21. ♖ae1
a6 22. ♜c3 ♜g6 23. h3 23...g4 was the threat. 23... ♜h8?



Diagram 132

“There comes a minute, even in the most complicated positions, when it is very unclear what is going to happen next, accordingly it is necessary, sometimes even obligatory to make a move, which would be useful whatever happens. To feel that moment, and to find this move is almost

an art, although I have never read verses devoted to it.

Now, for example, after a very difficult defence Ljuboevic improved his position and came to the conclusion that he had both the time and the opportunity to make such a move. Unfortunately for him the further course of the game showed that 23... ♜h8 is not an useful move, but a harmful one. It would have been much better to play 23. ♜e5, or even 23... ♗e5 and 24. ♜g7 next.” – (Petrosian).

24. ♗g3 ♖c7 25. h4! Geller launches an unexpected diversion on the king side and manages to deprive his opponent of his control over the key square “e5”. Black’s position dissipates instantly. **25...g4 26. h5! gf 27. hg fg 28. e5! ♗f5 29. ♖:f3 de 30. ♗:f5 ♖:f5 31. ♖:f5 gf 32. ♗:e5 ! ♖b6 33. d6 ! ♜h7 34. ♜d5 ♖d8 35. d7! ♖h4 36. ♖f2 ♖:f2 + 37. ♜:f2 ♗:e5 38. ♖:e5 ♜d6 39. ♖e8 ♖:e8 40. ♜f6+** Black resigned.

In positions with a black pawn on “c5”, a lot depends on some precise opening lines. For example if after **1. d4 ♜f6 2. c4 g6 3. ♜c3 ♗g7 4. e4 d6 5. ♜f3 0-0 6. ♗e2 e5 7. d5** Black plays **7...c5** immediately, White can retreat to “d2” with the bishop, i.e. **8. ♗g5 h6 9. ♗d2!? ♜h5** (If **9... ♜e8** then **10. ♖c1 ♜h7 11. h4! f5 12. h5! qh 13. ♖:h5 f4 14. g3!** with White’s

advantage, Soos – Minic – Bucarest, 1971). **10.g3** **♟d7** **11.h3** White played **11.♟c2!**? in the game Larsen – Quinteros, Mar-del-Plata 1981. There followed **11...♟df6** **12.h3** **♞d7** **13.a4** **♟e7** **14.♞h4** and White had the advantage. **11...a6** **12.♞h2** **♟df6** **13.♞g4** **♞h7** **14.♟c2** **♞d7** **15.♞g1** **♞g8** **16.0-0-0** **f5** **17.ef** **♞:f5** **18.♞d3**. We are following the events in the game Franco – Quinteros, Mar-del-Plata, 1982. Although the two opponents' actions in this game were far from perfect, White still kept some initiative.

In conclusion of this chapter we are going to see the brilliant, the great game of Petrosian against Gufeld, in which the future world champion demonstrated the wonders of prophylactics.

Petrosian – Gufeld **Moscow 1961**

1.c4 **g6** **2.d4** **♞g7** **3.♟c3** **♟f6** **4.e4** **0-0** **5.♞g5** **d6** **6.♟d2** **c5** **7.d5** **♟a5** **8.♞d3** **a6** **9.♞ge2** **e5?**. The complications after **9...b5** **10.cb** **ab** **11.♞:b5** **♞:e4** **12.♞:e4** **♟:b5** **13.♞:e7** were hardly favourable for Black, but Petrosian thought that **9...b5** **10.cb** **♞bd7** was interesting with further development of the game along the lines of the Volga gambit.



Diagram 133

"Optically, Blacks position looks very promising. After the blockage of the pawn chains in the centre the focus of the struggle moved to the sides. It looks like Black, having the possibilities to play both **b7 – b5** or **f7 – f5** might even have some advantage. Black however, should never forget that the pawns are pushed forward just

to open files and to enlarge the scope of action of the pieces. In this case the dynamic pawn structure is in favour of White, since White's forces are placed much better for the eventual opening of the position. " – (Petrosian).

10.0-0 ♖bd7 11.a3 ♜h5 Black plans some active counterplay on the king side with f7 – f5. **12.f3!** – prophylactics! If Black plays now 12...f5, after 13.ef gf 14.♖c2 and the "f5" pawn looks doomed. **12...♙f6 13.♙h6 ♜g7 14.g3!** This could be played only by Petrosian! His words: "White's position is so good that he can choose different plans at leisure. The pawn push g2 – g4 is temporarily delayed in favour of the modest g2 – g3, but now Black has to permanently reckon with f3 – f4. In a situation when one of the opponents has no opportunity to organize some active counterplay, while the other one, having a large space advantage has several options to improve his position – such a manner of playing can be much more dangerous than the straightforward actions. It is very difficult for the defending side to anticipate where the danger is going to come from..."

14...♞b8 15.♙h1! This is another case of prophylactics based upon a very deep evaluation of the position and an excellent calculation of variations. You would like to play b7 – b5? OK, you just do it! But after 15...b5 16.cb ab 17.b4! ♖a6 18.♜:b5 Black loses a pawn, or 17...cb 18.ab ♖:b4 19.♙e3 ! with ♞fb1 next.

15...♖c7 16.b3! The "cat and mouse" play continues. White is not in a hurry to play b2 – b4, but prepares first the duplication of the rooks along the "b" file. Petrosian is not threatening anything immediately, yet it is harder and harder for Black to find suitable moves. The worst thing for Black is his inability to anticipate the eventual strategical plans of his opponent. **16...♙e7 17.♞ab1 ♙h8 18.♞b2 ♜f6.**



Diagram 134

"Black is preparing another regrouping of forces which is finally going to enable him to push f7 – f5. If Black tries to accomplish it now or on the previous move, after the exchange on "f5", White would have a strong pressure on the diagonal "b1 – h7", after ♖d2 – c2. White could threaten then g3

– g4 and to open a "second front" on the queen side playing b3 – b4. All this would put Black against unsurmountable problems. Therefore the most reasonable choice for Black is to adhere to a passive strategy, awaiting the future intentions of White. Moves like 18...b6, and 19...Bb7 next were somehow increasing the defensive potential of Black's position. "– (Petrosian)

19.b4 ♘g8 20.♠e3 f5 21.bc dc 22.♙fb1. Black managed somehow, finally to do something but just like in the game Petrosian – Lutikov this "activity" accelerated the loss of the game. **22...♞f6.** It would have been better to prevent the penetration of the White rook with 22...b6, although after 23.a4 Black's position looks pathetic.

23.♙b6 ♠d6 23...♞d7 was not good because of 24.d6. **24.♠h6!** Another prophylactic move. Here is what Petrosian thinks about it : "Black still has some hopes to withstand the pressure and to get some counterplay after the exchange on "e4" and then if White takes with the pawn Black might play ♞f6 – g4 liquidating the dark square bishop, or if White takes with a piece i.e. ♞:e4 or ♠:e4 – Black will have the move ♞f5. It would be useful to understand that even if all this happens, if Black manages to realize all those "threats", White would

have a clear advantage, yet White does not need to give up anything that he has achieved up to now uselessly. "

24...Bf7. In case of 24...fe 25.♖:e4 ♖:e4 26.♗:e4 Bf7 White would play simply 27.g4! and Black's knight on "g7" remains "in exile". **25.♗g1!** Petrosian prevents Black's counterplay on the king side with this solid move. **25...f4?** Black breaks under the tension. After 25...fe 26.♗:g7+! ♗:g7 27.♖:e4 ♖:e4 28.♗:e4 White's advantage is substantial but the game wouldn't be over yet. Now Black's position is dissipating.

26.gf ♖d7 27.fe ♗:e5. 27...♖:b6 is also hopeless for Black after 28.ed ♗:d6 29.e5.

28.♗e6! Most probably this strong move was not expected by E. Gufeld. Now, the blockading move 28...♖h5 is not playable because of 29.♗e8+. On the other hand the only active black piece – ♗e5 is under attack, and after 28...♖f8 – the exchange sacrifice 29.♗:e5 determines the outcome instantly. **28...b5 29.cb c4 30.♗c6 ♗d8 31.♗:c4 ♗h4 32.♗c1 ♖h5 33.♗g5 ♖g3+ 34.♗g2 ♖:e4+ 35.♖:e4 ♗:h2 + 36.♗f1 ♗:f3+ 37.♖:f3 ♗h1+ 38.♗f2** This put an end to Black's agony and Black finally resigned.

Generally speaking, when you study the King's indian defence for White, and particularly Petrosian's system – you have to get yourself acquainted with all the games, annotations and articles by the 9th world champion – T. Petrosian who had a tremendously deep understanding of this opening in particular, as well as of chess itself.

In his next game against the Yugoslavian grandmaster S. Gligoric he managed to find an original manoeuvre and to almost refute the scheme of play chosen by Black.

Petrosian – Gligoric

Bled – Zagreb – Belgrade 1959

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.♖c3 ♗g7 4.e4 d6 5.♖f3 0-0 6.♗e2 e5 7.d5 ♖bd7 8.♗g5 h6 9.♗h4 a6 10.♖d2 ♗e8 11.0-0 ♖h7

12.b4 ♖g5. Otherwise Black would never manage to play f7 – f5. The diagonal h4 – d8 should be blocked somehow because White would have the move ♗h5 after the exchange ef – gf. **13.♖c1 f5 14.f3 ♗e7 15.♗h1.** M. Tal played against Fischer 15.♗f2 in the same tournament, but the king move is stronger. This was first played by F. Olafson against Gligoric in Yugoslavia as well. **15...♖f6 16.c5 ♖h5.** "It was surely infavourable for Black to exchange on "c5" twice, because of the loss of the "c7" pawn. Until now the opponents were playing very quickly. I was attracted by the possibility to test a positional idea which I noticed during the game F.Olafson – Gligoric. The champion of Yugoslavia was ready to get once again the same position and he didn't suspect anything..." – (Petrosian).

17.c6! b6 18.ef gf 19.g3!



Diagram 135

The wonderful idea of White becomes clear now. He is going to disrupt the attacking formation for Black on the king side with the move f3 – f4, while on the queen side White has an overwhelming positional advantage anyway.

19...♗f6! – the best practical chance. After 19...♖f6 20.f4 ef 21.gf ♖ge4 22.♗h5 Black has a very bad position. **20.f4 ♖g7 21.♖c4?!** White decided not to take on "e5" because of 21...♗:e5 22.♖c4 f4 and Black's pieces sprung to action. But after 21.a4! Black would have hardly obtained any counterplay.

21...ef 22.gf b5! Gligoric is very industrious in fighting for counterchances. With the last move Black intends to free the queen's rook with the help of the move a6 –a5. It is not

favourable for White to play 23.♖a5, because of 23...♗:c3 24.♖:c3 ♖e4+ and 25...♗b4.

23.♖d2 ♖e4 24.♗:f6 ♖:f6 25.♗f3?! "One more imprecision. The move 25.♖b3 would be connected with a pawn sacrifice – 25...♖:c3 26.♖:c3 ♖e4+. But then White plays 27.♖cf3! ♗:b4 28.♖g1 with a crushing king side attack. I thought that my position remains so strong that I could win without the use of any radical means." – (Petrosian).

25...a5 26.a3 ab 27.ab ♖g6. After 27...♖a3 White intended to play 28.♖db1 ♖a1 29.♗d4. **28.♖d:e4** White decided to simplify the position winning a pawn, but now Black's knight and a bishop become rather active. **28...fe 29.♗:e4 ♗f5 30.♗:f5 ♖:f5 31.♗h5 ♖f6!** Gligoric does not allow a simplification into an endgame after 31...♗f7? 32.♗:g6+ ! and 33.♖g1. **32.♖g1+ ♗h8 33.♖ce1 ♗f7 34.♗:f7 ♖:f7 35.♖e4 ♗h7 36.♖:b5 ♖a2**



Diagram 136

This is an amazing position. White has two extra pawns, but the win is far from certain, even problematic. The black pieces are too active. Petrosian simplifies into a rook endgame in the time-trouble, which should end in a draw if Black defends well. It is not easy however, to recommend anything better

than that, despite the two extra pawns.

37.♖d4 ♖:d4 38.♖:d4 ♖e7 39.f5 ♖7e2 40.♖h4 ♖f2 41.b5 ♖ab2? "This is one more example that even the most natural move, in complete harmony with the strict laws of chess strategy, can turn out to be a real blunder. It is amusing to know that Gligoric made this move without blinking an eye. Well, if he had thought for a while, he could have played 41...♖ac2, and his brilliant defence might have been crowned

with success. The game would have ended in a draw, then. " – (Petrosian).

42.b6!! This puts an end to it. If now 42...cb 43.♖c1. After **42...♖:b6 43.♖hg4 ♖b8 44.♖g7+ ♘h8 45.♖7g6** Gligoric resigned, since after 45...♘h7 46.f6 ♖f8 47.♖g7+ and 48.♖:c7 wins immediately.

In his "Chess Lectures" Petrosian analyzes the game Donner – Kavalek, Skopje 1972 in which Black played **7...h6**. Well, such a move could hardly be labelled principal, but it prevents radically the appearance of the bishop on "g5". **8.♖d2** In his annotations to this move we find something very wise: "After 8.0-0 ♖h7 9.g3! Black should not be stubborn, since after 9...f5 10.♖h4 ♖e8 (or 10...♖f6) 11.ef gf 12.f4! White obtains a clear advantage." Now, we have an entirely new idea – g2 – g3 in connection with ♖h4. This idea can be utilized in many other lines. In 1989 in New York city the amusing game I. Ivanov – Gelfand was played which was somehow missed by the ever-increasing flow of opening information. It started **1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.♖c3 ♖g7 4.e4 d6 5.♖f3 0-0 6.♗e2 e5 7.d5 a5**. This move, together with 7...♖bd7 and 7...♖a6 is one of the most popular. I. Ivanov played **8.g3!?**



Diagram 137

White prepares to meet the pawn advance f7 – f5 with a wonderful place for the knight – the "h4" square. White intends to exchange on f5, i.e. ef – gf and to play f2 – f4 next. The knight from the "h4" square is going to attack the "f5" pawn and if Black plays e5 – e4, the knight can go to the blocking "e3" square via g2. Black played

8...**Qa6** If 8...**Kh3** 9.**Qg5** !? is possible with 10.**h4** next. 9.**Qh4 Qc5** 10.**f3 Qh5** 11.**0-0?! (11.Qg2** was better). 11...**Qf4!** 12.**Qg2 Q:e2+** 13.**Ke:e2 Kh3** 14.**Ke3 b6** with an approximately equal position. But, if White had prevented the tactical stroke 11...**Qf4** with 11.**Qg2** White's position would have been much preferable. In the game Zayac – Shiva, Kwala - Lumpur 1990 after 9.**Qh4 Qc5** 10.**Ke2 Qh8** 11.**0-0 Kh3** 12.**Ke3 b6** 13.**f3 Qh5** 14.**Qg2 f5** 15.**ef Ke:f5** 16.**Ke:d2 Qf6** White played 17.**Kh6?! which proved to be a mistake. 17.g4 Kh3** would have been much better. The game ended in a draw. Lets return to the game Donner – Kavalek. After 8.**Qd2** Black played 8...**a5**. Next came 9.**Qf1 Qa6** 10.**g4!? Qh7** 11.**h4!? f5**. As Petrosian recommended 11...**Ke8** was interesting with the idea to play 12...**Ke6** next. White would have to play then 12.**h5 Qg5** 13.**Qg3** and then develop along the scheme: **f2 – f3, Qe1 – f2 – g2, Ke3** with preparation of active operations on the queen side. The initiative would be on the White side anyway.

12.**gf gf** 13.**ef Ke:f5** 14.**Qg3 Ke:d7** 15.**Ke3 Qb4** 16.**Ke:c1 e4** 17.**Ke:g1**



Diagram 138

17...**Qd3+?** The decisive mistake. After 17...**Qh8** White would have a clear advantage but a lot of interesting play could be expected. 18.**Ke:d3 ed** 19.**Qh5 Ke:f7** 20.**Qd2!?** In case of 20.**Ke:h6** Black would have some chance to complicate matters with 20...**Ke6!** There followed 20...**Ke:e8** 21.**Q:g7 Ke:g7**

22.**Ke:h5 (22.Ke:h6** was simpler).

22...**Ke:g4** 23.**Ke:h6 Ke:f5** 24.**f3** with a winning position for White.

The game Spielman – Ivantchuk was played in the super-tournament in Linares 1991. The opening part of it is very instructive for the study of Petrosian's system. After **1.d4** **2.c4** **g6** **3.♖c3** **♗g7** **4.e4** **d6** **5.♗f3** **0-0** **6.♗e2** **e5** **7.d5** **♗a6** the English grandmaster played **8.♗d2!**? V. Ivantchuk answered **8...♗e8** **9.a3** **c5** and White started active operations on the king side with **10.h4!**?



Diagram 139

Now, Black played **10...f5**, typical for positions like this, and White answered with **11.h5**. All that is not new at all. The "ECO" refers to the games: Larsen – Gligoric, Portorozh 1958, which continued **11...♗f6** **12.hg** (12.e4 is worth trying i.e. **12...gf** **13.h6** **♗h8** **13.f3** and then **♗f1**, **♗e3** preparing **g2 – g4**). **12...hg**

13.♗f3 **♗c7** **14.♗g5** **♖e7** **15.♖d3** with an advantage for White, and Gitzesku – R. Burn, Lugano 1968, in which after **8.♗d2** Black played **8...♗d7**. There followed **9.h4** **f5** **10.h5** **♗f6** **11.hg** **hg** **12.♗f3** **♗:e4** **13.♗:e4** **fe** **14.♗g5** **♗c5** **15.b4** **♗d3+** **16.♗:d3** **ed** **17.♗e4** and White kept the initiative. Ivantchuk chose another way – **11...f4!**?, but after **12.hg** **hg** **13.♗g4** **♗f6** **14.♗:c8** **♖:c8** **15.♗f3** **♗c7** **16.♗d2** **♗f7** **17.b4** had grave difficulties.

We can try to generalize a little bit over the contents of the last game, as well as the game Donner – Kavalek and ponder over the following question "What would happen if White plays **8.♗d2** not only after **7...♗a6**, or **7...h6**, but after **7...♗d7** and **7...a5** as well, with the intention to start pushing forward the "h" pawn?" It may sounds strange, but the cotemporary tournament practice gives only a partial and meagre answer to this question quoting games of the French grandmaster B.

Kouatly, who in answer to 7...a5 plays 8.h4!? Here are some of his games:

***Kouatly – Gunavan
Thessaloniki 1988***

**7...a5 8.h4 h5 9.♘g5 ♖a6 10.♘h2 ♜e8 11.♞d2 ♘h7
12.♙h6 ♞e7 13.♗f1 ♙:h6 14.♞:h6 ♞f6 15.g3 ♞g7
16.♞:g7+ ♞:g7** with an about equal position, but it is not quite clear whether it is favourable for White to exchange queens, or wasn't it better to occupy the "g5" square with the knight on move 9. Anyway, the appearance of a black pawn on "h5" weakens the "g5" square and hinders the pawn advance f7 – f5. White has definite reasons to rely on taking the initiative playing for example 10.♘d2 instead of 10.♘h2.

***Kouatly – R. Martin del Kampo
Thessaloniki 1988***

**7...a5 8.h4 ♖a6 9.♘d2 h5 10.f3 c6 11.♗f1 ♘c5 12.♙e3
cd 13.cd ♙d7 14.♘d2 a4 15.♘c4 ♞c7 16.♖a3.** White's position is better. White's play would have been near perfect if White had interchanged moves 10.f3 and 11.♗f1 to avoid the possibility 10...♙h6.

***Kouatly – Kasparov
Paris 1989***

**7...a5 8.h4 ♖a6 9.♘d2 ♘c5 10.g4 a4 11.h5 gh 12.g5 ♘g4
13.♗f1 f5 14.f3 ♗f2 15.♞:f2 fe.** Black has some initiative for the piece sacrifice. As far as I remember this game was played in a simultaneous display of the world champion against the French team and was a part of a chess-show. I don't think that Kasparov could afford to play in such a risky manner against, for example – Karpov in a world championship match.

Finally, the game

Kouatly – Cvitan
Los Angeles 1987

7...a5 8.h4 ♖a6 9.♗d2 ♗c5 10.h5 ♘d7 11.b3 h6 12.hg fg 13.♙c2 ♗g4 14.♗d1 c6 and the position was rather complicated. In fact, this game does not clarify anything, since White's play is not comprehensive enough. Why not play instead of 11.b3, 11.h6!? ♗h8 12.g3 with the idea 13.f3 ♗h5 14.♗f1?. And finally what is the right answer to the question: "Why not (after 7...♗d7) play 8.♗d2 followed by h2 – h4 next?"

The only game treating this, which I managed to find, was S. Nikolic – Kochiev, Pula 1988 and it did not answer this question satisfactorily. It went on **8.♗d2 ♗e8 9.h4 f5 10.h5 ♗c5 11.hg** (11.h6 was very interesting and if 11...♗f6 12.ef gf 13.♗f1 and if 13...♗g5 White seems to be better in the endgame after 14.♗:g5 ♙:g5 15.♙d2 ♙:d2+ 16.♗:d2, for example 16...a5 17.g3!? ♗f6 18.f4 ef 19.gf ♗fe4 20.♗d:e4 fe 21.♗d2!) **11...hg 12.♗f3 a5 13.♗e3?! b6 14.♙d2 ♗f6 15.♗:c5 bc 16.♙g5 ♗:e4 17.♙:g6 ♗f6 18.0-0-0 ♙e8 19.♙g3 a4** and Black took the initiative and accordingly won. The whole plan connected with the idea to exchange the dark square bishops looks dubious. Instead of 13.♗e3, 13.♗g5 seems to be much more natural and if 13...♗f6 then 14.ef gf 15.♙c2 and Black will have problems to guess where the danger is going to come from. White can patiently prepare to castle queen side and then make up his mind whether to play g2 – g4 or f2 – f4 on the king side.

It is high time we made some conclusions. We had a look over plenty of active possibilities on White's part. In fact, this is not a matter of theory, there are not many forced lines at all. What is important is to bring into action different positionally-motivated plans, which can be relatively calm, as well as sharp and tactical. It is very important also, that each game should be thoroughly annotated by the player after

teamwork analysis with the coach. The mistakes should be located and subsequently avoided. Every player will get some experience in this way after the sufficient period of time. All this depends on the capabilities and endeavours of the student and little by little he is going to pile up his own theory and not the "book" one, theory which has been tested in practice with bitter disappointments and wonderful successes.

Openings Arising After 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5

After these three moves several kinds of openings may arise i.e. the different modifications of the Benoni: 3...e5, 3...e6, 3...g6 and the Volga gambit 3...b5.

Lets start with 3...e5. White can continue 4.♘c3 d6 5.e4 ♗e7. What happens after 5...g6, the reader should have already seen in the chapter devoted to the King's indian defence. The move 5...♗e7 is an integral part of a plan connected with the exchange of the dark square bishops. Some time ago grandmaster I. Boleslavski advised me in answer to this system for Black to play: 6.♗ge2 0-0 7.♗g3 ♗e8 8.h4!?



Diagram 140

With this move White prevents the exchange of the bishops and provokes further weakening of Black's position creating the possibility to go into a favourable endgame. 8...g6 Black is consistently trying to follow his game-plan. The "h4" pawn was poisoned because of 9.♙h5, but now it is vulnerable

again. **9.♟h6 ♘g7 10.h5!** White does not need to enter the complications after **10.♟d2 ♜:h4**. It seems like White allows the opponent to realize his plans but the following position will be definitely in favour of White.

10...♟g5 11.♟:g5 ♞:g5 12.♟d2 ♞:d2+ (otherwise White will have **13.♟h6** with a powerful king side attack) **13.♞:d2**



Diagram 141

Black has already done what he wanted to, exchanging his “bad” bishop for the “good” bishop of the opponent. In this position however, the decisive consideration in the evaluation of the position is the space advantage of White, and not some abstract reasoning about “good” or “bad” bishops. Well,

objectively speaking – Black’s bishop looks much worse than his White’s counterpart, since it is restricted in its movements by the white pawn chain. On the other hand the bishop that was exchanged, could have played a very important role, defending the queen side against White’s advance there. I think that the position in the last diagram is strategically lost for Black, since he can not offer much resistance against White’s offensive on the queen side. White can calmly play – **♟d3, f3, a3, ♖b1, b4**, double the rooks on the “b” file etc. and if necessary to open another front for action on the king side (mind the “h5” pawn). Black has nowhere to show any activity. If Black plays **13...f5** in the diagrammed position after **14.hg hg 15.ef gf** White can play the calm **16.f3**, restricting Black’s pawns, but he can also try the immediate offence on the “h” file with **16.♞h6, ♟d3, ♞ah1, ♘b5** etc., which Black is hardly going to survive. You can try to get a better acquaintance with positions of this type in the second volume of my and Mr.

Slutsky's book "Endgame Contours". I usually advise my students to master the realization of the strategical plans for both sides in positions of this type in the following endgames, which have been annotated in the "Endgames Contours":

Bertok – Geller

Kiev 1959

1.d4 f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e5 4.c3 d6 5.e4 e7 6.ge2 0-0
7.g3 e8 8.h4 g6 9.d3 a6 10.h5 g5 11.d2 f6
12.c1 :d2+ 13.:d2 f4 14.ge2 :d2 + 15.:d2



Diagram 142

15...g7 16.g3 d7 17.a3
f6 18.hg fg 19.b4 d7 20.f3
b8 21.ab1 e8 22.b2 c7
23.hb1 a8 24.ge2 cb 25.ab
a5 26.ba :a5 27.c1 f7
28.c2 c5 29.b3 :b3
30.:b3 e7 31.b6 a6
32.b5 d8 33.g4 a2 34.g5
f8 35.c3 a3 36.h1 f7
37.b5 a2 38.:d6 :f3
39.:c8+ d8 40.f6 g3 41.f8+ c7 42.:h7 + Black
resigns.

O'Kelly – Ulvestad

Malaga 1966

1.d4 f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e5 4.c3 d6 5.e4 g6 6.d3 g7
7.ge2 0-0 8.f3 e8 9.e3 h6 10.d2 :e3 11.:e3
h4+ 12.g3 h3 13.d1 g7 14.f2 h6 15.d2 :e3+
16.:e3 d7 17.a3 a6 18.b4 b8 19.hb1 c7 20.c3 b6
21.e2 b7 22.d3 f5



Diagram 143

23.bc bc 24.ef ♖b6 25.♗f2 gf
 26.g4 ♗f6 27.♞a2 ♜d7 28.gf
 ♜:f5 29.♗fe4+ ♜e7 30.♞ab2
 ♞fb8 31.♗f2 ♜c8 32.♗:d6 ♜:d6
 33.♗e4+ ♜e7 34.d6+ ♜:d8
 35.♗:c5 Black resigns.

Gligoric – Quinteros
Manila 1973

1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 g6 4.♗c3 ♜g7 5.e4 d6 6.♗f3 0-0
 7.♜e2 e5 8.♜g5 h6 9.♜h4 ♝c7 10.♗d2 ♗h7 11.♗b5 ♝d7
 12.f3 a6 13.♗c3 ♝c7 14.♞b1 ♗d7 15.a3 ♗df6 16.b4 b6
 17.♝b3 ♜d7 18.bc bc 19.♝b6 ♞fc8 20.♝:c7 ♞:c7



Diagram 144

21.0-0 ♗e8 22.♞b6 ♜f6
 23.♜:f6 ♗h:f6 24.♞fb1 ♜c8
 25.♜d1 ♞a a7 26.♜a4 ♞ab7
 27.♜c6 ♞:b6 28.♞:b6 ♗d7
 29.♞b1 ♗f8 30.♗a4 ♜e7 31.♗f2
 f5 32.♜e3 f4+ 33.♗f2 ♗ef6
 34.♗b3 g5 35.♗a5 ♗f7 36.♗b6
 ♗:b6 37.♞:b6 ♜e7 38.♜a4 ♗d7
 39.♞b1 ♗f6



Diagram 145

40.g3 ♖e7 41.h4 fg+ 42.♖:g3 gh+ 43.♖:h4 ♖f6 44.♖h5 ♖f7 45.♗:d7 ♖:d7 46.♘c6 ♖c7 47.♖:h6 ♗h3 48.♖g5 ♗g2 49.♘d8 ♖e8 48.♖b8 ♖g7+ 51.♖f6 Black resigned.

Lets pay some attention now to the position of the modern Benoni arising after **1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 c5 4.d5 ed 5.cd d6 6.e4 g6 7.f4** Black can change the order of moves on his second and third move and I would like to keep your attention on that particular moment for a while. The chess players that are ready to play against the Nimzo-indian defence have better options against not only the Queen's gambit, but against the modern Benoni as well, in comparison with the chess players that play 3.♘f3. Besides the aggressive scheme that we are going to deal with in this chapter, White can also develop the bishop to d3 and the knight on "g1" to "e2", i.e. he has a freedom of choice. **7...♗g7 8.♗b5+** The idea of this bishop check is to deflect the knight on "f6" from the "e4" pawn.

8...♘fd7. If 8...♗d7 or 8...♘bd7, then 9.e5! Such a line is very instructive: 8...♘bd7 9.e5 ♘h5 10.e6 ♖h4+ 11.g3 ♘:g3 12.hg ♖:h1 13.♗e3 ♗:c3 + 14.bc ♖e4 15.♖f3 ♖:f3 16.♘:f3 fe 17.de 0-0, which was played in one of the games of O. Romanov. We analyzed the final position and we came to the conclusion that White should continue: 18.ed ♗:d7 19.♗:d7 ♖:f3 20.♗c5 h5 (20...♖:g3 21.♖f2 ♖d3 22.♗e6+ ♖g7 23.♖e2 and 24.♖f1) 21.♖b1 ♖:c3 (21...b6 22.♗c6) 22.♗e6+ ♖h7 23.♖:b7+ ♖h6 24.♗d4 ♖:g3 25.♗g7+ ♖g5 26.♖b5 with excellent chances for a win. It is quite possible that White can

improve on this and find some way to refute this variation even more convincingly, but it is more than enough to have one reliable refutation against an incorrect variation, since lines like that are played very rarely in the tournament practice, anyway.

So, **8...♖f7**. White can play here **9.a4**, **9.♖f3**, **9.♗d3** but we are going to deal with a very rare continuation **9.♗e2!?**.



Diagram 146

The idea of the last move of White is not only to prevent the quick advance of the pawn chain of the opponent on the queen side, but help as well the preparation of the attacking formation of the White pieces on the other side of the board. White has some advantages with the bishop on "e2" in

comparison with bishop "d3". Black doesn't have the tempo-move **c5 – c4**, and the eventual pin **♗c8 – g4** is rendered harmless in advance, and if the white knight follows the route **♖f3 – d2 – c4**, the bishop can comfortably take the "f3" square. The drawback of the move **9.♗e2** lies in the relatively diminished defence of the "e4" pawn. Black can play **9...0-0** in answer to **9.♗e2**, or force **10.g3** with the help of **9...♗h4+**. Castling has been met in practice much more often.

9...0-0 10.♖f3 ♗e8 11.0-0. White is not afraid for the fate of the "e4" pawn, since after **11...♗:c3?! 12.bc ♗:e4** the positional compensation is more than sufficient for the minimal material sacrifice. White can increase the pressure patiently with **13.♗d3**, **14.c4 15.♗b2**, **16.♗d2** etc., or try the sharp **13.f5**, or **13.♗d3 ♗e8 14.f5**. Anyway, there was not a single player to be tempted by the "e4" pawn on move 11 in

the tournament games of my pupils. Unfortunately, I have never played this line, myself.

11... ♖a6. The most logical move. This is the beginning of Black's counterplay on the queen side. White has a clear scheme to improve his position. He has to bring the bishop from "c1" to "g3", the knight from "f3" to "c4", the bishop from "e2" to "f3", the rook from "a1" to "e1" and then to proceed with the central breakthrough e4 – e5. Black should not passively await all this but should strive for counterplay connected with b7 – b5. The attempt to bring back the knight from "d7" to "f6" looks a little bit dangerous. After 11... ♖f6?! 12.e5! de 13.fe ♖g4 White can start something which is very typical for positions like this i.e. 14. ♗g5!? ♖b6 15.e6! fe 16. ♖d2 with a very strong initiative. Black can not play for example: 16...c4+ 17. ♗h1 ♖f2+? 18. ♗:f2 ♖:f2 since after 19. ♗e3 he loses the queen. In fact, by playing 11... ♖f6, Black is in serious jeopardy to contribute to the list of miniatures.

Lets go back to **11... ♖a6.** Black intends to bring the knight to "c7" and to prepare b7 – b5. **12. ♖d2!**? White is maneuvering the knight to "c4" in order to paralyze the opponent attacking the "d6" pawn.

12... ♖f6. This move looks satisfactory. Black increases the pressure on the "e4" pawn, without being afraid from e4 – e5.
13. ♗f3.



Diagram 147

This is the critical position in which the Black has three different options: 13... ♖b4 13...h5, 13... ♖c7. We are going to treat them one after the other.

13... ♖b4. Black tries to play tactically and intends to answer 14. ♖c4 with the counter-

attacking 14...b5 **14.a3!** White should play precisely. **14...d3.** Otherwise 13...b4 would be senseless.

15.c4 c:c1 16.B:c1. Black managed to exchange the valuable bishop of his opponent, but nevertheless White finished his development and is ready for the central pawn-breakthrough 17.e5.

16...b5 That is the only way to do something against the central pawn advance.

17.c:b5 c:e4 18.A:e4 B:e4 19.c:d6! White has to capture on "d6" with exactly that knight. It is important to keep the control over the "d4" square and to open the "c" file for the rook. **19...Bd4 20.Bf3**



Diagram 148

The position is definitely in favour of White who has in answer to 20...a6 – the elegant 21.Bfe1!

13...h5 Black is preparing a king side attack starting with 14...d4. **14.f5!** Generally speaking, a move like this, surrendering the control over the vital "e5" square should not

be advantageous for White. But, after Black pushed his "h" pawn, the "g6" square became vulnerable and White's object to seize the initiative on the king side is easily understandable. It is worth mentioning that the move 14.h3 wouldn't prevent 14.d4!?, at all.

Unfortunately, the position after 14.f5 has never occurred in any games of my pupils. Lets discuss a little bit the chances of both sides. It would be hardly good for Black to play the standard : 14...d7 15.c4 d:e5 16.d:e5 A:e5 because of the knight manoeuvre c3 – e2 – f4 followed by a piece sacrifice on "h5" or "g6". White has an almost sure

breakthrough on the king side. It looks like Black has to start with 14...♖c7. White can prevent 15...b5 with 15.a4 i.e. 15...b6 16.♖e1 ♗a6 17.♗f1. Besides, White can play 15.♖e1 immediately, and after 15...b5 or 15...b6 enter the complications after 16.fg fg 17.e5. If we set ourselves the aim to analyze this position to completion we have evidently to work on multiple complex variations. Since we are working over a relatively rare line and we are trying to create problems for the opponent several moves before the critical position, there is no sense to analyse the position so thoroughly. We are preparing the chess player for competitions of some normal strength and not for candidates- matches.

Lets have a look at the third opportunity – 13.♗c7. White can simply play 14.♗c4, to answer 14...b5?! with 15.♗:d6 ♖:d6 16.e5 ♖b6 17.d6. Now, a lot of black pieces are hanging. Black is inavoidably losing material.

The game Zayac – Ladner, Adelaide 1988 continued : 14...♖b8 15.a4 b6 16.♖e1 ♗a6 17.♗a3 ♗d7 18.♗ab5 ♗:b5 19.ab a5 20.ba b5 21.a7 ♖b6 22.♖c2 and White had an extra pawn and a winning position. We do not want to advertize this or that opening scheme. I am ready to admit that some of the aggressive variations that I have given are not forced. You can always play some other opening system.

The most important thing is that the reader should have noticed by now the method of chosing your opening repertoire and the rational approach to the opening stage of the game. The young player should have a very clear picture in his head about what his opening repertoire should be, while any undecisiveness is to be avoided at any rate. I have to tell you that Yugoslavian "Encyclopedia of Chess Openings" gives very little, almost nothing about this line.

There is a game, an old one though, Lapienis – Sorokin, 1974 which went on 9.♗e2 0-0 10.♗f3 ♖e8 11.0-0 ♗a6 12.♗d2 ♗f6 13.♗f3 ♗b4 14.♗e2? ♖b8 15.♖e1? ♗g4!

16.♠:g4 ♠:g4 17.♖:g4 ♘c2 18.♖e2 ♘:a1 with Black's advantage, but to make conclusions upon such a game looks a little bit ridiculous.

We have to deal now with the queen-check 9...♖h4+.

In 1985 in the tournament "A. Sokolsky – In Memoriam" in Minsk, the following amusing game was played:

Korzubov – Kapengut:

9...♖h4+ 10.g3 ♖e7 11.♘f3 ♘b6 12.0-0 ♠g4 13.e5 0-0 14.♘e4 de 15.d6 ♖e8 16.fe ♘8d7 17.♠f4 ♠:f3 18.♠:f3 ♘:e5 19.♘:c5 ♘:f3+ 20.♖:f3 ♖c6 21.♖c1 ♘d5 22.b3 ♘:f4 and the opponents agreed to a draw, although I think that Black was clearly better. Kapengut's idea to control the "c4" square, threatening to take the "e4" pawn, starting with the move 11...♘b6 proved to be completely justified. The drawback of this idea is the unsatisfactory position of the knight on "b6". White can try to use this with the following variations for example: 11...♘b6 12.a4!? ♠:c3+ 13.bc ♖:e4 14.♙f2!? Players that like complicated sharp positions can try to analyze a little bit the hair-raising complications arising after 14.a5 ♘:d5 15.♖a4 ♖f5 16.g4 ♖d7 (16...♘:c3 17.gf ♘:d1 18.♖e4+ ♙f8 19.fg!) 17.♖:d5 ♖a4 18.♖:d6 ♘c6 19.♖f6!? ♖f8



Diagram 149

Lets return our attention to the move 14.♙f2!?. Black can not capture the "d5" pawn with the knight – 14...♘:d5?, since after 15.♠b5+ White will have a crushing attack, 15.♘g5 looks also very strong by the way. In case of 14...♖:d5 15.a5 ♖:d1 16.♖:d1 ♘d7 17.♖:d6 White has an excellent positional compensation for the sacrificed

pawn. This is probably the best for White since both 14...0-0 15.a5 and 14...♘g4 15.h3 look unsatisfactory for Black.

Well, Black can try Kapengut's idea on the next move. The game Alexandrov – Romanov, Minsk 1990 continued: 11...0-0 12.0-0 ♖b6 13.♞e1 ♘g4 14.♙g2 ♕:c3 15.bc ♚:e4 16.h3 ♘d7 17.c4 ♘a4 18.♚d2 ♚c2 19.♘d3 ♚:d2 20.♘:d2 f5 21.♘b2 ♘a6 22.♞e7 ♜f7 23.♞ae1 ♘b4 24.♘b1 ♞af8 25.♞7e6 ♘c8 26.h4 ♘d7 27.♞6e2 h5 28.♘f3 and White won the exchange on the next move with ♘f3 – g5. The game continued for more than 50 moves, but Black managed to draw. Black could play much better before that, though. Instead of 13...♘g4, 13...♕:c3 14.bc ♚:e4 accepting the sacrificed pawn was worth considering and then, there was some idea to try to exchange the other bishop as well on move 16.h3 with 16...♕:f3 17.♕:f3 and play 17...♚c4.

White's move 13.♞e1 doesn't seem to be the best. **13.a4** is much more logical i.e. **13...♕:c3 14.bc ♚:e4 15.a5 ♘:d5 16.♘g5 ♚e7 17.♚:d5 ♚:e2 18.♘d2 ♘d7!? 19.♞fe1 ♘c6 20.♚:f7+ ♜f7 21.♞:e2 ♜f8 22.♞e7 ♘d7 23.c4 h6 24.♕c3 ♘f6 25.♞ae1 hg 26.fg ♘h5 27.g4.**



Diagram 150

This variation is evidently far from being forced but I am giving it as a landmark for further analysis trying once again to attract the attention of the reader to the methods of improvement of your opening repertoire.

□

Lets try to work over the positions in which Black does not hurry with the move e7 – e6.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 g6 4.♟c3 ♗g7 5.e4 d6 6.h3. White deprives his opponent from moves like ♟c8 – g4 and ♘f6 – g4. 6...e6 7.♘f3 0-0 8.♗d3 ed 9.ed. This line is rather old. Nowadays 9.cd is top-fashion. White won convincingly in the game Alburt – De Firmian, USA 1990. The reader can find this game in the "Chess Informant" 50. I am expecting an information boom in this line, so the Modern Benoni is under the threat of a theoretical extermination. Lets have a look at the old-fashioned 9.ed.



Diagram 151

Black has to play actively in positions with such a pawn structure, otherwise he would be positionally squeezed. White has a clear space advantage and can prepare some pressure on the "d6" pawn. White has to complete his development first and then start his actions along the following scheme: 0-0, ♗f4,

♖d2, ♖ae1, exchange a pair of rooks on the "e" file, and then g4, ♖g2, ♗g3, ♖f4, ♘f3 – g5 – e4 etc. in different move orders. Since it is almost impossible for Black to rely on ♘f6 – e4, his counterplay is much harder to define. The next move is more than obvious. 9...♞e8+ 10.♗e3 and now the basic move of Black's counterplay 10...♘h5. If 10...♗f5 11.♗:f5 g7 12.0-0 ♘e4 White gets the advantage after 13.♘:e4, as well as after 13.♘e2. Black could play as well 10...♗h6 11.0-0 ♗:e3 12.fe ♖e7 (Capturing the "e3" pawn with 12...♞:e3? gives White a very strong attack after 13.♖d2 and 14.♘g5.) 13.e4 ♘bd7 14.♖d2 a6 15.♞f2. We are following the game Botvinnik – Kavalek, Beverweik 1969. The game went on 15...♘e5? "A very serious mistake. Black didn't have to hurry with his plan and had to defend at first the "f7" pawn with

15...♖f8. Then Black could try to reorganize with ♖e8 and f7 – f6 keeping solid although passive position. " – (M. Botvinnik) White won a pawn after 16.♗:e5 ♖:e5 17.♖af1 ♗d7 18.♖:f7 ♖d4+ 19.♗h1 ♖e5 20.♖f4. Now 20...♗f5 was losing after 21.♖:b7 ♗:d3 22.♖h6. L. Kavalek played 20...♗:h3 21.♗e2 ♗d7 and now, as Botvinnik pointed out White could win immediately with 22.♖f6! ♗g7 23.♖:d6 (23.♖d1 ♖f8) 23...♖f8 24.♖f6. We have to mention as well that if Black tries to play an endgame with the following order of moves: 9...♖e7+ (instead of 9...♖e8+) 10.♖e2 ♖:e2+ 11.♗e2 ♗a6 12.a3 ♖e8+ 13.♗d1 ♗f5 White keeps the initiative with 14.♗:f5 g4 15.♗h4! ♗e4 16.♗:e4 ♖:e4 17.♗:f5 ♖:c4 18.♗e3.

Lets go back to **10...♗h5**. White plays **11.0-0** and Black **11...♗d7**. If White plays carelessly, Black intends to seize the initiative with something like, for example: 12.♖d2 a6 13.a4 ♗e5 14.♗:e5 ♖:e5 15.♖ae1 ♖h4 16.♗f1 ♗d7 and Black's position is already preferable. The tournament practice proved that the attempt to play sharp and risky 12.g4? is also untimely. Botvinnik demonstrated an example of strategy in his game against Matulovic in Palma de Majorca, 1967. **12.♗g5! f6 13.♗d2** The retreat with the bishop to "h4" also deserves attention. The game Alexandrov – Savchenko continued: 13.♗h4 ♗e5 14.♗:e5 de15.♗e4 ♗f4 16.d6!? White wouldn't have anything after 16.♗g3 because of 16...f5 17.♗:f4 ef 18.♗f3 ♗:c3! 19.bc ♖d6. 16...♖e6 17.d7 The game would be very complicated after 17.♗d5 ♗:d5 18.♖:d5 ♖:d6 19.f4 or 19.♖ad1 (instead of 19.f4) 19...♖:d5 20.♗:d5 ♖b8 21.♗c7 ♖e7 22.♖d8+ ♗f7 23.♗b5 ♖d7 24.♗d6+ ♗e6 25.♖:c8 ♖:c8 26.♗:c8 b6 and Black regains his piece. Alexandrov failed to obtain any advantage. After 17...♖:d7 18.♖:d7 ♗:d7 19.♗:b7 ♖b8 20.♗d5 ♗:d5 21.cd a very complicated endgame arose, in which White finally won in the end. It is worth mentioning that if Black plays 12...♗f6?!, instead of 12...f6 White easily obtained an advantage in the

game Alexandrov – Dotchev which continued : 13.♔:f6 ♖:d:f6
 14.♖d2 ♜g7 15.♖ae1 ♕f5 16.♕:f5 ♖:f5 17.g4 ♜g7 18.♖h6
 ♖b6 15.♜g5 White had a clear advantage.

13...f5 (14.g4 was the threat) **14.♕g5! ♕f6 15.♕:f6 ♖d:f6 16.♖e1**
 "The exchange of all the rooks would help White to neutralize Black's
 activity and in this way would enable him to penetrate the position of the
 enemy king". **16...♖:e1+ 17.♖:e1 ♕d7 18.♖d2 ♖f8 19.♖e1 ♖e8**
20.♖:e8 ♖:e8 21.a3 ♜g7 22.b4 b6 23.bc bc.



Diagram 152

The position is not so simple as it seems to be at first sight. White exchanged the dark square bishops with the idea to use the long back diagonal with his queen. Black must pay attention to the open "b" and "e" files, because the white queen might penetrate Black's position. It looks like Black has

an active position on the king side but this is illusory. The black knights are placed poorly and White has excellent opportunities to organize a pawn advance on the king side. In conclusion, White has a small but lasting positional advantage.

24.g3 h6?! 24...♖e4 was worth considering with the idea to exchange a couple of pieces after **25.♖b2 ♖:c3 26.♖:c3+ ♜f6**. Generally, I don't aim at analyzing each position to complete exhaustion with the idea to find some absolute truth. I would like to help the young player to understand the basic strategical picture. I am not going to try to determine the exact moment in which the small advantage turned into a decisive one. **25.♖c2 ♖c8 26.♜h2 ♜f7 27.♖d2 ♜g7 28.♜g1!** The beginning of the active play. At first the "f2" pawn will go to "f4" to restrict further the mobility of the enemy pieces. The

march of the "g" pawn will follow. **28...♖e8 29.f4 ♘f8 30.♗g2 ♜g8 31.♝f3 ♗b8 32.♜h4 ♜e7 33.♗c2 ♘f7** White has accomplished a lot. The space advantage has been increased and the king side of the Yugoslavian grandmaster became even more vulnerable. **34.♜e2 ♗d8 35.♝f3 ♜f6 36.♗b2** "You don't have to look for any deep sense in the last three moves of White, or in what follows. This is the necessary tactics of waiting, when you don't have enough time at the end of the 5th hour of playing, when it becomes much more probable for the chess players who belong to older generations, to make fatal mistakes." – (Botvinnik). **36...♗a5 37.♜c3 ♜c8 38.♜h4 ♜e7 39.♘f2 ♜c8 40.g4!** "Black weakened his "g6" pawn carelessly, and suddenly White started an offensive with his last move. By the way White had an advantage anyway and he would have managed to push the "g" pawn, having secured his king at the "a2" square first. " – (Botvinnik). **40...♜e7 41.g5! ♜fg8 42.♜e2 h5 43.♘f1 ♜c8 44.♜g3.** The White pieces are concentrated for the beginning of the decisive onslaught. The end is near. **44...♜d7 45.♜e2 ♗a4 46.♘f2 ♜e8.**



Diagram 153

47.♜g6! The logical conclusion of the fight. If **47...♖:g6** then **48.♗h8**, and if **47...♜:g6** – **48.♜:f5**. There followed : **47...♜:d5 48.♜:h5! ♜de7 49.♗g7+** Black resigned because the mate on the next move is unavoidable.

□

We have to pay some attention to the Volga gambit. I used to play this opening with Black myself, sometime before. Little by little, however I gave it up. First of all. White can easily

avoid it playing 1.c4 or 1.d4 ♖f6 2.♗f3. Secondly, I came to the conclusion that this opening serves the purpose to play only for a draw, which is easy to make with Black in a lot of variations. When you meet players that are inferior to you in strength. you are naturally trying to beat them, while they usually don't mind a draw, but unfortunately in the Volga gambit you can not rely to achieve more than a draw. Black gets chances to win only when White plays for a win. Finally, the strategical aspects of the position are not so complicated, and by the way you begin to prefer to play with an extra pawn, than with the pawn down, when you enter adult age.

It is not easy at all to play against the Volga gambit with White. You need a lot of experience, deep understanding of the scheme you have chosen and...patience. You have first of all to neutralize Black's initiative and start to think about your extra pawn later. Lets have a look at some games.

Shereshevsky – Lputian
Minsk 1984

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 4.cb a6 5.ba. You can of course play simply 5.b6, but to accept the gambit is much more principal. **5...g6.** There are some fine points already. With this move Black deprives White of the possibility b2 – b3, for example in case of 5...♗:a6 6.g3 g6 7.♗g2 d6 (7...♗g7!? 8.b3, although it is difficult to tell if White's position improves so much with the fianchettoing of the dark square bishop. Besides that, Black forces the White knight to occupy the "c3" square.

6.♗c3. White threatens e2 – e4 and Black must take on "a6" with the bishop. **6...♗:a6 7.g3 d6 8.♗g2 ♗g7 9.♗h3!?** In this way White prevents Black's counterplay against the "d5" pawn. If 9.♗f3 Black can play 9.♗bd7 10.0-0 ♗b6!?

9...♗bd7 10.0-0 0-0 11.♖c2 ♖a5! An excellent move. If White tries to develop his forces along the scheme: ♗d2,

b1, b3, a4, – Black must be able to meet the move b2 – b3 with ♖a5 – a3. **12. ♖d2 ♖fb8 13. ♖ab1.**



Diagram 154

13... ♖e5 14. b3 ♖c8 Black created the immediate tactical threat – 15... ♖f5 16. e4 ♖:h3 17. ♖:h3 ♖f3+ 18. ♖h1 ♖:d2 19. ♖:d2 ♖:d5, therefore **15. ♖f4**. Now White would like to play a2 – a4 next, so Black's best reply is – 15... ♖a3!. Now White can force a draw with 16. ♖c1 ♖a5 (otherwise 17. a4

c4? 18. b4) 17. ♖d2, or can continue to manoeuvre. 16. ♖h3! is very interesting. White can exchange the light square bishops, without having weakened the "d3" square first, only in this variation of the Volga gambit. Now after 16... ♖:h3 17. ♖:h3 Black can play 17... c4, but White continues with 18. ♖fc1 (18. b4 ♖:b4 19. ♖b5 ♖a4 20. ♖:a4 ♖b:a4 21. ♖c3 ♖a3 22. ♖b7 leads to an approximately equal position). 18... cb 19. ♖:b3 and Black will have to fight for the draw. Whatever happened, Black had to play 15... ♖a3. S. Lputian preferred to force the move e2 – e4 with **15... ♖f5?!** and suddenly was in grave danger. The game continued: **16. e4 ♖c8 17. a4!** Black's counterplay on the queen side was stopped. The "b3" pawn is reliably protected, and in answer to c5 – c4, White can always play b3 – b4!

17... ♖a6 18. ♖fd1 ♖d8. Black couldn't achieve anything with a pawn-push on the other side – 18... g5. White would continue calmly 19. ♖b5 ♖d8 20. ♖e2 and if 20... g4 21. ♖ec3. **19. ♖e1 g5 20. ♖fe2 g4 21. ♖h1 h5.** This king side advance was not launched voluntarily by Black. The main part of his forces are on the other side of the board but unfortunately Black has no prospects there. **22. ♖f4 ♖h6 23. ♖ce2 ♖f8**

24.♠c3 ♖g7 25.♙:e5. This was playable, but the exchange of the dark square bishop was far from forced. 25.h4 deserved attention. 25...de 26.♟d3 ♜d7 27.♞b2? This is simply a blunder. It would have been much better to improve the position patiently. 27.h4 looked very promising putting an end to Black's counterplay on the king side. White's next few moves could look like that i.e. 28.♞g1, 29.♟c3 and then 30.♟b2.

27...♖f6 28.♞g1 ♙:e2! 29.♖:e2 ♖:b3. Black regained his sacrificed pawn and solved his problems. 30.♖c2 ♜b4 31.♜a1 c4 32.a5 ♜c8 33.♜a3 ♟c5 34.♜c3 ♟b3! 35.♟:c4 ♟d4 36.♖a2 ♟b5. The opponents agreed to a draw here in connection with the repetition of moves: 37.♜c2 ♟d4.

Shereshevsky – Subura Bidgoshc 1990

The first 12 moves were the same as in the previous game and after 13.♜ab1 Black played 13...♟e8 (instead of 13.♟e5).



Diagram 155

Black intends to manoeuvre with the knight – ♟e8 – c7 – b5, and to 14.b3 (with the idea 14...♟c7 15.a4) to play 14...♖a3!. Frankly speaking, I made a bluff here with 14.♟f4!? and my opponent answered 14...♟c7?, without too much thought. After 15.a4! White's strategy triumphed since 15...c4

is not good because of 16.♟b5 ♖b6 17.♟:c7 ♖:c7 18.b4. Instead of 14...♟c7 the Polish chess player should have parted with his bishop 14...♙:c3!?, and after 15.♙:c3!? ♖:a2, or 15.bc ♙c4 and Black has some counterplay. Well, after 15.♙:c3 ♖:a2 16.h4 White's attack on the king side is not harmless at all. The game went on 15...♖b6 16.b3.

Strategically, the fight is almost over. Black has no play on the queen side, therefore White has only to simplify the position and the realization of the advantage will be easy enough. 16...♖e5 17.♟fe1 ♘c8 18.♜d3 ♜a6 19.♜a2 ♘d7 20.♜:e5 ♘:e5.



Diagram 156

White intends to bring the white square bishop to the diagonal "f1 – a6", then exchange the dark square bishops and then turn his attention to the king side. 21.♘e4? The idea is right but the realization is wrong. 21.e3 was much more precise.

21.♜c7!? Now I thought for about half an hour and understood that I shouldn't have deprived the "e" pawn from the "e4" square. I had to "take my move back". 22.♘g2! Well, it is usually disappointing to admit your mistakes but to be stubborn is always worse. 22...♟a6 23.e3! The tactical threat of the opponent 23...♜b5 will be parried with 24.♘f1. 23...♟a7 24.♘c3 ♘:c3 25.♜:c3 ♟b7 26.e4 ♜a6 27.♘f1 ♜b4 28.♟d2 White has fulfilled his plan. Black did what he could possibly do and now it was White's turn. 28...f6 29.♘c4 ♟g7 30.f4 ♟f8 31.♟e3 ♟aa8 32.♟be1 ♟f7 33.e5!? Well, White could have tried to disorganize the opponents defence on the king side beforehand, but I didn't see any use to fool around. 33...fe 34.fe ♘f5 35.ed ed 36.♜e4 ♘:e4 37.♟:e4 ♟af8 38.♟e6 ♟c7 39.♟e2 ♟d7 40.♟e4 ♟d8 41.♟e7. The Black knight is isolated now. I decided that the most reliable way to win the game is to force an endgame. 41...♟b6 42.♟f1 ♟d8 43.♟f:f7+ ♟:f7 44.♟:f7+ ♟:f7 45.h4 ♟g7 46.♟g2. Finally, Black got fed up and

accordingly resigned. In case of 46...♖f6 47.a5 ♖b2+ 48.♖e2! wins easily.

Lets try to answer the following question: "Could White obtain an advantage avoiding somehow the "bluff"? " What about **14.a4!**? instead of 14.♘f4. Now, if White manages to play 15.b3 we have nothing to talk about. Therefore **14...c4**. If we continue our analysis: **15.♘b5 ♗d8 16.♖:c4 ♘b6 17.♗h4 ♘:a4** (17...♙f6 18.♘g5) **18.♘d4** – we reach:



Diagram 157

White has the advantage.

The Gruenfeld Defence

I tried already to characterize this opening at the beginning of the book. Black is trying to grab the initiative early in the game but gives White a tremendous freedom of choice. The chess players that are playing this defence since their young years, who know it almost "by heart", usually look for another opening, as a reserve. It is very difficult almost imposible, to be in the centre of the information boom and to constantly follow the new developments in the variety of sharpest variations. The world champion Kasparov, himself failed to withstand the pressure of Karpov in his matches for the world title, so the prestige of this opening was undermined. The

score of Black (+1 -6 = 16) can hardly be labelled satisfactory. Indeed, Kasparov's only win came as a result of Karpov's blunder in a good position.

To prepare with White against the Gruenfeld defence is not an easy task but is much simpler than Black's task to play it from the other side. Nevertheless, to study one system is much easier than to study ten. White's real problem is that if he wants to make Black's life hard, he has to enter a principal analytical discussion, having up his sleeve some novelties. I will give you an example of such an analysis.

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5. Now my pupils usually prefer different systems. A. Alexandrov likes to play the super-modern variations with 4.♗f3 ♕g7 5.cd ♖:d5 6.e4 ♖:c3 7.bc. E. Zayac and E. Raisky prefer the calm lines after 4.♗f3 ♕g7 5.♕g5, but all started with the analysis of the variation **4.♗f4 ♕g7 5.e3.** Black can castle here, or play 5...c5, since 5...c6 leads to a variation of the Schlehter's system of the Slav defence. 5...c5 is played more often to avoid the pawn sacrifice 5...0-0 6.cd ♖:d5 7.♖:d5 ♗:d5 8.♕:c7 in which Black usually recaptures the pawn, but White usually ends up with a better endgame. The game Shereshevsky - Akopian, Melburn 1988 continued 8...♖a6 9.♕:a6 ♗:g2 10.♗f3 ♗:f3 11.♖:f3 ba 12.♖g1. The idea of this move is to avoid the pins of the knight after 12.♗e2 ♕g4! 13.h3 ♕h5, or 12.♗d2 ♕b7. V. Akopian played very well: 12...♕e6! 13.♗d2 ♕d5 Black attacked the "a2" pawn and didn't allow White to regroup his forces like: 14.♖gc1, ♗f3 - e1- d3 and then double the rooks on the "c" file. **14.♖e5.** If 14.♖e1 then 14...♖fc8, taking away the rook from the influence of the bishop on "c7". **14...♕:e5 15.de.**



Diagram 158

White's position looks better. Black has to fight a little bit to reach the draw. This book is not however, an opening monography, so the reader can learn everything he would like to know about the variation with the pawn sacrifice on "c7" in some other books. I am going to show you some analysis about

the line **5...c5 6.dc ♖a5 7.♖b3** that you will be unable to find in the theoretical books. The "Encyclopedia of Chess Openings" devotes to **7.♖b3** very little space.

The main line looks like this: **7...♗c6 8.♖b5 ♕e6 9.♗f3 dc 10.♗g5 ♗d5 11.♖:a5 ♗:a5 12.♗:e6 fe 13.♗:d5 ed 14.0-0-0 e6 15.♕d6 b5** with an unclear position according to an analysis by A. Mihaltchishin. But wasn't it better for White to play simply **9.♖:a5 ♗:a5 10.cd ♗:d5 11.♕b5+**, instead of **9.♗f3**? Now, in case of **11...♗c6 12.♗e2** Black does not have sufficient compensation for the pawn. Therefore it would be better for Black to keep the "c" line free for the rook and retreat **11...♗f8**. White develops the knight **12.♗ge2**.



Diagram 159

Black has a lot of continuations but we failed to find a clear road to equality. Here are some of the lines of our analysis **12...♗:c3 (12...♗:f4 13.ef) 13.♗:c3 ♕:c3+ 14.bc ♖c8 15.♕e5! f6 16.♕d4 ♕c4 17.♕:c4 ♗:c4 18.♖b1!** and White is not afraid to "lose" a piece after **18...e5?! 19.♖:b7**

cd 20.cd. Maybe, Black can find some way to equalize but I want to show the reader the method for preparation of your opening repertoire, and not to try to prove analytically any absolute advantage for White.

Besides that theory recommends as reliable for Black: 7...dc 8.♗c4 0-0 9.♘f3 ♖e4 10.0-0 (10.♘e5 ♗:e5 11.♗:e5 ♘c6 12.♗g3 ♘:c5 13.♗b5 ♗f5 with an equality in the game Bohm – Henley, Arnhem – Amsterdam 1983.) 10...♘:c5 11.♗c2 ♘c6; and also another line 7...♘e4 8.♗b5+ ♗:b5 9.♘:b5 ♘a6 10.cd ♗:b2 11.♗b1 ♗g7 12.♗c4 ♘e:c5.

Lets try to analyze these two lines, one by one:

7...dc 8.♗:c4 0-0 9.♘f3 ♖e4 10.♘e5 ♗:e5 11.♗:e5 ♘c6.



Diagram 160

The position is really equal after 12.♗g3 ♘:c5 13.♗b5 ♗f5. White has however a very interesting continuation **12.♗b5!?** ♗:b5. If 12...♘:c5 13.♗:a5 ♘:a5 white has an elegant tactical stroke 14.♘d5! ♘c6 15.♘:e7+! ♘:e7 16.♗d6 winning material.

13.♗:b5 ♘:c5 The beautiful move 13...♘:f2 leads to an interesting position after 14.♗:f2 (14.♗:c6 ♘d3+) 14...♘:e5 15.♘d5 ♗e6! (15...e6 16.♘c7! ♗b8 17.♗hd1 a6 18.♗e8!?) 16.♗ad1 (16.♘:e7?! ♗g7 17.e4 f5) which requires further analysis.

14.♗d4!, and now both 14...♘e6 15.♗:c6 bc 16.♘a4, as well as 14...♘:d4 15.ed ♘e6 16.0-0-0 lead to endgames in which White doesn't risk anything, playing for a win, perfecting his endgame-skill in the process.

Before we start to deal with the main line after **7.♗b3 ♘e4**, I have to pay some attention to the other moves: **7...a6**, **7...♗d7**, **7...0-0** and **7...♘a6**.

The first one 7...a6? is ready for the wastepaper basket after 8.♖a4+.

The move 7...♠d7 will be dealt with, when we talk about W. Steinitz's school, about E. Znosko – Borovsky's book. The best move for White is – 8.♠e5. You can get acquainted with the line 8...♗a6 9.cd ♗:c5 10.♖c4 ♗a6 11.a3 when we start studying classics. As for 8...dc 9.♠:c4 0-0 10.♗f3 ♗c6, White can simply castle with an advantage. For example 11.0-0 ♖:c5 12.♠f6 ♗a5 13.♖d1 ♠:f6 14.♠:f7+ and 15.♖d7.

The move **7...0-0?! was played in the game Shereshevsky – Lalev, Primorsko 1990. The game continued 8.♖b5! ♖:b5 9.cb ♗bd7 10.c6 bc 11.bc ♗b6** White won a pawn but fell back in development. Black can rely to get some counterplay after ♗f6 – e4.



Diagram 161

Therefore White should not try to compensate for his lack in development, but should try to prevent opponent's counterplay with his already developed pieces, following E. Znosko – Borovsky's advices.

12.♠e5! Black doesn't have now ♗f6 – e4 and White is free to continue his development.

12...♠e6 13.♗f3 ♗c4 14.♠:c4 dc 15.♗d4 ♗d5 16.♠:g7 ♗:g7. The game reached a new critical moment. Black managed somehow to get some counterplay and created the threat to exchange the knights, with liquidation of the "c6" pawn and a probable draw. White should play precisely again. **17.♗d2! ♖fc8** If 17...♖ab8 18.b3! **18.♖fc1! ♗:c3** In this way Black takes back his pawn, but enters a difficult rook endgame. He didn't have any other choice though, since after 18...♗b4 White would have played 19.♗ce2! ♠d5 20.♗f4

keeping the material advantage. **19. ♖:e6+ fe 20. ♗:c3 ♖:c6 21. ♗d1 a5 22. ♗d4.** It is a real pleasure to play this endgame with White. Black has weak pawns on a5, c4, e6 and e7 and White can attack and win them at leisure. Suddenly the Bulgarian player deprived his opponent from his pleasures resigning the game. After 22... ♗b8 White still had to show some endgame technique before winning.

Black was not much more lucky in the game Shereshevsky – Zahariev, Dobritch 1991, playing **7... ♖a6?!** White got an extra pawn playing **8.cd ♖:c5 9. ♗b5+ ♗:b5 10. ♗:b5+** (10. ♖:b5 was interesting, and if 10... ♖:d5? then 11.0-0-0 winning material.) **10... ♗d7 11. ♗:d7+ ♗:d7.**



Diagram 162

Once again, just like in the previous game, White has the material advantage and must neutralize the not so dangerous initiative of the opponent. More or less, this is the typical script of this line, the difference usually consists of the quantity of White's material advantage and the strength of Black's

initiative. **12. ♖f3!?** I didn't like to fall back further in development keeping the bishop at any rate. If **12. ♗d1 ♖fe4 13. ♖ge2 ♖hc8** Black had some chances to equalize. **12... ♖d3+ 13. ♗e2 ♖:f4+ 14. ef ♖hc8 15. ♗ad1.** The knight-check seemed to me a loss of time, because Black should go with the king to "e8" anyway. **15... ♗e8 16. ♗d3.** White defends additionally the "c3" square with the idea to double the rooks on the "e" file eventually.

16... ♖d7 17. ♖e1 ♖c4 18. ♗f1 It is possible that **16. ♖e3!?** is preferable with the idea to have the option to go to "d3" with the king. **18... ♖:f4?** This move loses. Black had to exchange

the bishop 18...♗:c3, and after 19.bc ♖b6 Black had some chances for a successful defence.

19.d6! ♗:c3. The only way to offer some resistance was by playing 19...e6 20.♗d5 ♗c4 21.♗c7+ ♗:c7 22.dc ♗c8, although after 23.♗c1 White shouldn't have too many problems. **20.♗:e7+ ♗d8 21.♗:c3 ♗f6 22.♗3e3** Black resigns.

It is high time we started dealing with the move 7...♗e4. The "Encyclopedia" gives some short lines: "7...♗e4!? 8.♗b5+ ♗:b5 9.♗:b5 ♗a6 10.cd (Ruban – Semenjuk, USSR 1986 – the "Chess Informant" 41/526.) 10...♗:b2 11.♗b1 ♗g7 12.♗c4 ♗e:c4= Khasin, Ruban". I would like to elaborate a little bit. First of all, if we have a look at a volume 41 of the "Chess Informant" we are going to see that only four more moves have been given from the game Ruban – Semenjuk: 10...0-0 11.f3 ♗e:c5 12.0-0-0! ♗d7 13.♗b1 ♗fc8 14.e4± (annotation by Ruban and Khasin). Everything looks very simple, right? The Gruenfeld defence is a very complicated opening, and suddenly White calmly castles queen side, under the fire of all the enemy pieces, keeping the extra pawn without any problems...

To get a serious advantage in a position like that is hardly possible without some non-standard decisions, nevertheless castling queen side is a move that "smells". It even "stinks". It is not so difficult for Black to find a refutation. Instead of 12...♗d7? Black could play 12...e5!



Diagram 163

Now if White exchanges 13.de ♗:e6, you can see Black's positional compensation even without a telescope, and lines like: 13.♗g5 f6 14.♗h4 ♗h6 15.♗f2 ♗b4 16.♗c3 ♗f5 threatening 17...♗d3+, or 17...♗:a2+ were not very inspiring for White. Evidently,

castling queen side must be discarded. Strategically White's plan in positions like this is to try to transform the material advantage into a positional advantage. White would not object to return the pawns c5 and b2 in the process of completing development, under the condition that the knight from "e4" captures the "c5" pawn. Black can hardly reach equality as the "Encyclopedia" certifies with 10...♗:b2 11.♞b1 ♗g7 12.♙c4 ♘e:c5. White is better after 13.♘f3 ♙f5 14.♞d1 ♘a4 15.♘bd4! ♙d7 16.0-0 ♘b2 17.♙:a6 ba 18.♞b1 ♘d3 19.♙g3. The game A. Mihalevsky – Ohotnik, Voronezh 1983 was very instructive. Black played 10...g5, instead of 10...0-0 or 10...♗:b2. Here is the whole game: 11.♙g3 ♙:b2 12.♞b1 ♙g7 13.f3 ♘e:c5 14.♙c4 ♙f5 15.♞d1 (15.e4? ♘:e4!) 15...0-0 16.♘e2 ♘a4 17.♘bd4 ♙d7 18.♙:a6 ba 19.0-0 ♙b5 20.♞fe1 ♙c4 21.e4 e5 22.♞c1 ed 23.♞:c4 ♘b2 24.♞:d4 ♙:d4 25.♘:d4 ♘d3 26.♞b1 ♘f4 27.♙:f4 gf 28.♘c6 f6 29.g3 fg 30.hg ♞f7 31.♙f2 ♞d7 32.♙e3 ♞c8 33.♙f4 ♙f7 34.♞b3 ♞dc7 35.♙f5 a5 36.f4 a4 37.♞b4 a6 38.♞b6 ♞d7 39.♞:a6 ♞b7 40.♞:a4 h5 and Black resigned. In the previous line after 10...♗:b2 11.♞b1 ♙g7 White can play in the same way, like in the game we have just seen. 12.f3 ♘e:c5 13.♙c4 0-0 14.♘e2, although I think that this is less convincing than 12.♙c4 and 13.♘f3. Concerning **10...0-0**:



Diagram 164

We established that it is unfavourable for White to play 11.f3 ♘e:c5 12.0-0-0. After that we were tempted to play 11.♙c4, analogous to the game Mihalevsky – Ohotnik. The move 11...g5! is much more sensible in this case. Black managed to exchange the dark square bishop on "g3" with one

of the knights, and the other knight on "a6" is going to capture the "c5" pawn. We spent a lot of efforts, analyzing this position but we couldn't prove any advantage for White. We had to remember once again Znosko – Borovsky and looked for good moves with the already developed forces. This is how we came to the move **11.d6!**, leading to a very sharp and complicated position. What should Black do now? Black should strive for the initiative or for regaining the material. The white pawn on "c5" with the help of its neighbour is trying to escape from the enemy knights and later in the game White's space advantage will be a reliable prerequisite for a successful completion of development with minimal material losses. Therefore Black's best policy is to capture the "b2" pawn. **11...♙:b2**. In case of 11...ed 12.cd ♙:b2 13.♖b1 White has excellent chances to complete his development keeping the advantage. 11...♞b4 12.♖c1 ♞:a2 13.♖c4 is not very promising for Black either. 11...e5 closes the long diagonal and after 12.♙g3 ♞a:c5 13.♞f3 ♞:g3 14.hg e4 15.♖c1! White seizes the initiative **12.de!** This is the fine point of White's strategy. Now, Black can restore the material equality by means of 12...♙:a1 13.ef♙+ ♞:f8 14.♙c4 ♞:c5 (14...♞a:c5? 15.f3 and 16.♙d6+) But after 15.♞f3 Black is going to have a hard time in the endgame.



Diagram 165

If Black is not happy with what is going on, he must play **12...♖e8 13.♖b1 ♙f6**. White doesn't have much of a choice either if he wants to rely on some advantage, otherwise all would be "Much Ado For Nothing". **14.♞d6! ♙c3+**. Black's answer is forced since **14...♖:e7?! leads after 15.♞:e4**

B:e4 16. A:a6 ba 17. D:f3 to an endgame in which Black has some chances for a draw but this is a very small consolation for the fans of this sharp opening.



Diagram 166

What is White thinking about? 15. C:d1 looks bad after 15... D:f2+ , so 15. C:e2 B:e7 16. D:e4 B:e4 17. C:d3 , but here Black can play suddenly 17... B:f4! 18. ef A:f6 and now White is on the verge of resignation. All is not so simple in the diagrammed position. Instead of the natural 15. C:e2 ?

White should play the original and unexpected move **15. C:d1!!** Now 15... B:e7 leads to an endgame similar to that one after 16. D:e4 B:e4 17. A:a6 ba 18. D:e2 , from the annotations to the previous move. If Black is not happy with this, he must try the altogether risky: **15... D:f2+ 16. C:c2 B:e7 17. A:a6 ba 18. C:c3 D:h1 19. Bf1!**



Diagram 167

White has the advantage.

Finally I would like to mention that mistakes are possible, even unavoidable in sharp variations like these. Our aim is to show the reader that Black should be constantly on the alert

in the Gruenfeld defence. White has the opportunity to prepare difficult strategical, tactical and theoretical problems at home, at leisure, while the Black player should be ready to solve all those problems on the board.

The Opening Repertoire for Black

The chess players are guided by different principles when they chose the opening repertoire for Black, in comparison with the principles we have been dealing with up to now. Some players are oriented towards some very aggressive tactics with the idea to seize the initiative after the first few moves, disregarding White's right to start the game. Some others keep to more moderate lines with the idea to obtain a lively and interesting position. The third group is trying in fact only to equalize at first, accepting sometimes to play inferior positions without any chances to win, positions that they can try to hold when the advantage of the opponent is minimal. You have to chose your openings considering what you are striving for. Naturally, the degree of risk is much greater for the players of the first group in comparison with those of the third group, accordingly their chance for success or a failure increases. Very good results in the opening preparation are obtained by players that take into account the class of the opponent, his situation in the tournament and even his state of health.

Players that play both 1.e4 and 1.d4 create much greater problems for the players that are preparing to play with Black, but usually players like that are rare, and they are not so well experienced in all the openings, and if they really are, they surely belong to the chess elite. It is not possible to know everything after all.

I belong to the second group in this conventional classification, and more or less I teach my pupils accordingly. In answer to 1.e4 I am trying to include in the opening repertoire of my students the Ruy Lopez, particularly the Chigorin system, as well as all the other openings you have to know, after 1.e4 e5, and also the French Defence. In answer to 1.d4 we work predominantly on the Nimzo-Indian defence, the Queen's Indian defence, the Bogoljubov system and the Ragozin defence. When I am choosing the opening repertoire of my students I intend first of all to enable them to obtain after the opening a decent position with complex strategical contents and if possible to avoid getting drowned in the enormous flow of opening information. In this way my students will save enough time to improve in the other stages of the chess game. Generally, my approach to the opening preparation for Black is not much different than that with White, the emphasis lies heavily upon the basics. I would like to clarify this.

If we want to play with White some line in the King's Indian defence we can as a rule obtain several types of position: an aggressive one, a little bit risky though, or a calmer one with less chances to get an advantage. The chess player can opt for the more aggressive one, but he must have one as a reserve.

If the chess player plays in a tournament, and suddenly his main weapon gets refuted he can easily find something different without changing his general opening approach. Usually, it is not easy to radically change with Black the evaluation of some very popular line, but if you really manage to do that, the system that you have chosen is indeed a dangerous one. If you have analyzed it well, and if you have tested it in training games, that system can be played with a good chance of success and it is going to exploit the effect of surprise. Well, in this case it will be more difficult to use the

"reserve" line. Still you have to be prepared for the extreme case of complete failure if your main line needs a sudden repairs. Let's try to express all this with some chess language.

In the Chigorin system of the Ruy Lopez, there is a variation which was named: Keres counterattack. After **1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♖c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5. 0-0 ♗e7 6.♗e1 b5 7.♙b3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3 ♘a5 10.♙c2 c5 11.d4 ♖c7 12.♘bd2** P. Keres in the candidates-tournament in Zurich 1953, played against I. Boleslavsky **12...♗d8**. White played principally **13.♘f1** and Black responded with **13...d5**. The Estonian grandmaster had analyzed this position beforehand, and managed to win. Lately, the theoreticians found that **14.de** was the best for White, and proved that White was better and gradually that line went into oblivion. I was attracted by the positions arising after Black plays **d6 – d5**, not immediately, but after **13...cd 14.cd ed 15.♘:d4** (In the game Klován – Shereshevsky, Minsk 1973, White played **15.♘g3**, but after **15...♘c6** failed to recapture back the pawn and lost.)

15...d5.



Diagram 168

The next few moves are obvious.

16.e5. In the game Petrushin – Shereshevsky, Kaliningrad 1973, White played **16.ed?!**, but after **16...♗:d5** the pin on the "d" file was rather unpleasant for White, who lost subsequently.

16...♘e4 17.f3 the most principled answer. I was playing in a simultaneous display against grandmaster Boleslavsky, back in 1963, and I tried **17...♘g5**, but he crushed me. Nowadays, the contemporary theory refers to the game Sigurionson – Torre, Reykjavik 1980 which continued, **18.♘g3 g6 19.♗h2**

♖e6 20.♗: e6 ♜:e6 21.f4 ♞ac8 22.♞d3 d4 23.f5 and considers the position unclear. The game was annotated in the "Chess Informant" 29. I don't know if White played well or not, but I don't like Black's position after 17...♗g5, so I have no desire to analyze it since I don't believe in it. I am interested in another continuation – **17...♞c5**. (Now 17...♞:e5 18.fe ♞c5 19.♞e3 de doesn't work because of 20.♗f3.)



Diagram 169

What should White do now?
 18.fe looks forced. In the game
 M. Zeitlin – Shereshevsky, Riga
 1969 there followed : 18...de
 19.♞e3 ♗c4 20.♞:e4 ♗:e3
 21.♗:e3 ♞:d4 22.♞f3 ♞b8
 23.♗h1 ♞e6 24.♗f5 ♞:f5
 25.♞:f5 g6 26.♞c2 ♞d2
 27.♞ac1 ♞f2 28.♞e4 ♞b7
 29.♞g4 ♞d8 30.♞f1 h5 31.♞e4

hg 32.♞:b7 g3 33.♞:a6 ♞e3 34.♞ce1 ♞d5 35.♞:f2 gf 36.♞f1
 ♞:e5 37.g4 ♞d4 38.♗g2 ♗g7 39.♗g3 ♗f6 40.♗f3 ♗g5
 41.♞b7 ♞e3+ 42.♗g2 ♗h4 43.♞f3 ♞d3 44.g5 ♞b6 45.a3 ♞b3
 46.a4 ba 47.♞a1 f1 ♞+ 48.♞:f1 ♞:b2+ 49.♗h1 ♗g3 White
 resigned. Well, White's play was far from perfect, but you
 must have in mind the effect of surprise and the time-trouble
 that White was in, during the second part of this game. After
 almost 20 years I saw the same position in the game Hellers
 – Zs. Polgar, World Junior Championship Adelaide 1988. The
 Swedish player was luckier and after 18.fe de 19.♞e3 ♗c4
 20.♞:e4 ♗:e3 21.♗:e3 ♞:d4 22.♞f3 ♞b8 23.♗h1 ♞b7 24.♗d5
 ♞:d5 25.♞:d5 ♞d8 26.♞b3 ♞d3 27.♞f5 g6 28.♞e4 ♞3 d4
 29.♞f3 the game ended in a draw. F. Hellers analyzed this
 game and pointed out that Black could have played
 19...♞b7!, instead of 19...♗c4, threatening 20...♗c6,

20...♖b6, 20...♘c4 and White would have grave problems to solve.

Instead of 18.f2?!, White has a very interesting move in the diagrammed position – **18.b4!** It is bad for Black now to play 18...♙:d4+? 19.♖:d4 ♖:c2 20.ba, and because of that Black has to take the pawn. So, **18...♙:b4 19.fe**. The arising position is extremely complicated. I am going to show you some analyses that are indeed rather old, but the position after White's 19th move hasn't been played in the games of my pupils and the author. It is highly probable that these analyses might be mistaken somewhere, since the tournament practice has not put them to the test. Black has to choose between 19...de and 19...♖:e5. For a long time we considered that the move 19...de was losing, because of: 20.♖:e4 ♙f5 21.♘:f5 ♖:d1 22.♙:d1 ♖c3 23.♖b1 ♙c5+ 24.♙e3 ♖d3 25.♘h6+ gh 26.♖g4+ ♘h8 27.♙:c5 ♖:b1 28.♙e7 ♖g6 29.♖:g6 or 29.♙f6+ and White has a decisive advantage in the endgame. Yet, someone asked me once whether Black could play 25...♘h8, in answer to 25.♘h6+?



Diagram 170

The situation has suddenly changed. Black has given up the "f7" pawn with check, assuring a square for the king to retreat. After 26.♘:f7+ ♖g8 27.♘h6+ the knight can be captured already. We couldn't find a direct refutation of the move 25...♘h8, but it was not easy to guarantee anything in a position that most of the pieces of

both sides were hanging.

We didn't analyze this position too thoroughly, because we studied this variation from the point of view of Black, and sometimes you tend to accept what you desire to be a part of

reality. The reader has of course his rights to make a thorough and objective analysis.

Let's have a look now at the other move **19...♖:e5**. White has two obvious answers – **20.♗e2** and **20.♙b2**. In the first case Black has the advantage: **20.♗e2 ♜c5 21.♙e3 de 22.♗d2 ♝c4! 23.♝c6 ♖:d2! 24.♝:e5 ♝:e3!**.



Diagram 171

White has a bad position, despite the extra queen. In case of **25.♖:d2** Black plays **25...♝c4+** **26.♘h1 ♝:d2 27.♝:d2 ♙d4**, and if **25.♖h5 – 25...♝f5+** **26.♘h1 g6** is possible, and to **25.♖b1 – 25...♝:c2+** **26.♘h1 ♖f2** is simple and good.

The right move for White is **20.♙b2!** The play can continue: **20...♙b7 21.ed ♖:e1 22.♖:e1 ♙:e1 23.♗:e1 ♝c4 24.♙c3!** (**24.♙a1 ♖e8! 25.♗:e8+ ♖:e8 26.♝c6 ♙:c6 27.dc ♖e6!**) and the endgame is favourable for White.



Diagram 172

Now, the situation is much more real, since White finally has some advantage. To keep this advantage however, White should make a lot of moves that are not easy to find, in a situation when the time for thinking is limited, and only grandmasters of extra-class are capable to do that. We can stop here. After all, this variation is

very rare and the move 13.♟f1 will hardly be ventured by many players, so we are still not going to play with super-players and we can be sure that the basis is set. Well, if the next tournament game refutes our line we shall have to give it up. The practice however, tends to prove just the opposite. Generally the players with White are trying to avoid entering the principled positions and in this way the student is freely educated in the fine points of the Ruy Lopez, and the strategical plans. Even if we suppose that our basis is wrong, it can serve us for a long time before we have to change for something different on the side, acceptable even without any particular novelty.

After we have found something interesting in the most principled line of the variation we can start moving back from the top downwards, analysing at first the ways for White to avoid our position immediately before entering it and then work on the other ways for White to run away from it. The possibility for Black to meet with difficulties after 13.d5 is much higher, than for example in the exchange variation, or in the line with 5.d4 in the Ruy Lopez.

This approach to the study of the openings concerns first of all the choice of the opening variation and the method of explanation follows the opposite logics. First of all, you study the "second rate" openings like: the Ponziani, the King's gambit, the Evans gambit and the similar ones and then you study conscientiously the Ruy Lopez.

This book is not an opening monograph, so we are going to study the Ruy Lopez, some of the second rate openings, as well as the Tarrash variation in the French defence. I am going to deal with as much material, as I treat in my teamwork lessons with my pupils.

The Ruy Lopez

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗:c6 dc 5. 0-0. We are going to deal with this move mainly, since it is the most principled in a theoretical aspect, while the methods of playing, and the basic plans if White plays something different on move 5 comprise a part of our, with Mr. L. Slutskij, work-“Endgame Contours”.

In case of 5.♗c3 the character of the endgame struggle is very similar to the positions arising after 5. 0-0 f6. With 5.0-0 White creates immediate opening problems. I will show you one of the games of E. Raisky, a student of mine, who managed to outplay completely his opponent in the following game:

B. Georgiev – Raisky

Veliko Tarnovo 1991

5.♗c3 f6 6.d4 ed 7.♗:d4 c5 8.♗de2 ♖:d1+ 9.♗:d1 ♗e6
10.♗f4 0-0-0 11.♗e3 c4 12.♗d1 ♗c5 13.♗:d8+ ♗:d8 14. 0-0
♗e7 15.♗d1+ ♗c8 16.♗d4 ♗f7 17.♗df5 ♗:f5 18.♗:f5 ♗e8
19.♗e1 g6 20.♗g3 b5 21.♗e3 ♗d6 22.f3 b4 23.c3 a5 24.♗f1
♗e5 25.♗d2 ♗d8 26.♗e2 ♗d3 27.♗c1 a4 28.a3 ba 29.ba ♗d6
30.♗a1 ♗e6 31.♗a2 h5 32.♗f1 f5 33.ef ♗:f5 34.h3 ♗d5
35.♗e3 ♗d3+ 36.♗e1 ♗b5 37.♗c1 ♗b1 38.♗d2 ♗f4 39.♗b2
♗:e3+ 40.♗:e3 ♗:c1 41.♗b4 ♗:c3 White resigned.

5...f6 6.d4 ed 7.♗:d4 c5 8.♗b3 ♖:d1 9.♗:d1 ♗g4. It is useful for Black to force the white pawn to “f3” before going to “e6” with the bishop. Until 1966 this order of moves was considered non-obligatory for Black who used to play 9...♗d6, but in the game Fischer – Portisch, Havana 1966, the American grandmaster played 10.♗a5! and it became evident that Black was in a serious trouble. This game was thoroughly dealt with in the book “Endgame Contours”. **10...f3 ♗e6 11.♗c3 ♗d6 12.♗e3.** White tried 12.a4 immediately in

the game Maljutin – Alexandrov, Sofia 1989 without any success. The game continued: 12... $\text{d}7$ 13. $\text{e}3$ $\text{b}3$ 14.cb $\text{c}6$ 15. $\text{d}5$ 0-0-0 16. $\text{d}c1$ $\text{d}4$ 17. $\text{d}:d4$ cd 18. $\text{f}2$ $\text{c}6$ 19. $\text{b}6+$ $\text{c}7$ 20.a5 $\text{h}e8$ 21. $\text{c}4$ $\text{c}5$ 22. $\text{d}1$ $\text{d}3+$ 23. $\text{e}1$ $\text{f}5$ 24.e5 $\text{f}4$ 25. $\text{d}2$ $\text{e}6$ 26.g4 $\text{h}6$ 27. $\text{h}1$ $\text{b}4+$ 28. $\text{d}1$ $\text{h}3$ 29. $\text{a}4$ $\text{c}5$ 30. $\text{d}2$ $\text{e}8$ 31. $\text{b}4$ cb 32. $\text{c}4$ $\text{f}3$ 33. $\text{d}2$ $\text{d}8$ and after several more moves White resigned.

In the game Motwani – Agdestein, Novi Sad 1990 White tried the risky 12.e5, but after 12... $\text{f}e$ 13. $\text{e}4$ $\text{b}3$ 14.ab $\text{e}7!$ 15. $\text{e}3$ $\text{b}6$ 16.b4 cb 17. $\text{a}:b6$ $\text{f}6$ 18. $\text{d}:d6$ cd 19. $\text{c}7$ $\text{e}8$ 20. $\text{a}5$ $\text{f}8$ 21. $\text{a}:b4$ $\text{f}4$ 22.c3 $\text{e}6$ 23. $\text{a}5$ $\text{g}5$ 24.h3 $\text{c}4$ 25. $\text{d}a1$ $\text{c}6$ White had a worse position and lost subsequently. The game was annotated in the "Chess Informant"/50.

12...b6 13.a4.



Diagram 173

13...a5! Black has no need to enter the complications arising after 13...0-0-0 14.a5 $\text{b}7$ 15.e5, and he should not fear the exchange of the bishop. The line 14. $\text{b}5$ 0-0-0 15. $\text{d}:d6+$ cd and then 16... $\text{d}e7$ and 17... $\text{d}5$ leads to a good endgame for Black. The game Sedina – Zayac, Pjatigorsk 1987 had a

very amusing finish. Instead of 15. $\text{d}:d6+$, White played 15. $\text{c}1??$ and after 15... $\text{a}:h2+$ had to resign.

14. $\text{d}2$ 0-0-0 15. $\text{d}a1$ $\text{d}h6!$ White created the threat 16. $\text{b}5$ $\text{e}7$ 17. $\text{a}7+$ but Black neutralized it cold-bloodedly. The exchange 16. $\text{a}:h6$ gh enables White to make good use of the advantage of the two bishops, while the weaknesses of the pawn structure on the king side are immaterial.

The game Bus – Shereshevsky, Bydgoszcz 1990 continued
 16.♖b5 ♖f7 17.♗c1 ♜e7 18.♖:d8+ ♖:d8 19.♖:d8+ ♗:d8
 20.♗e2 f5 21.♜f4 c6 22.♗bc3 ♜f6 23.♗f2 fe 24.fe ♗d7 25.h3
 b5 26.♜e3 b4 27.♗d1 ♗d6 28.♗f3 ♗c4 29.♜c5 ♜b2 30.♗d4
 ♜f7 31.♗b3 ♜f6 32.♗e3 ♗b2 33.♗a5 ♜c3 34.♜a7 ♗a4
 35.♗b3 ♜e5 36.♗c5 ♗:c5 37.♜:c5 ♜d6 38.♜d4 ♜f8 39.♗g4
 ♜h5 40.♗e3 c5 41.♜b2 ♗c6 42.♗e5 ♗b5 43.♗d3 ♜e8 44.g4
 g5 45.♜c1 h6 46.♜b2 ♜g7 47.♗c4 ♜b2 48.♗:b2 ♜f7
 49.♗d1 h5 50.gh ♜:h5 51.♗f2 ♜f7 52.e5 ♜g6 53.♗d2 ♗c6
 54.c3 b3 55.♗d1 ♗d5 56.c4 ♗e5 57.♗c3 ♜f5 58.♗f2 ♗f4
 59.♗b3 ♗f3 60.♗d1 ♜h3 White resigned.

After the opening Black had an excellent position but I didn't want to engage in any forced variations. The move 25...b5 was hardly necessary, and was not prepared well. White missed to refute his opponents play with 34.♜f8!, instead of 34.♜a7, and if 34...♗a4 35.♗d1, but the Polish player was in a grave time-trouble. White made the decisive mistake on the 51st move when he had to play 51.♗e3 (instead of 51.♗f2) with some chances to draw.

Let's deal now with 1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.♜b5 a6 4.♜a4 ♗f6 5. 0-0 Some players used to play **5.d3** as well. In this case I recommend the following scheme: 5...d6 6.c3 g6 7. 0-0 ♜g7 8.♗bd2 0-0 9.♖e1 ♗d7! Black has to bring this knight to "e6" in order to prepare the pawn advance f7 – f5. If 10.♗f1 ♗c5 11.♜:c6 bc 12.d4 ed 13.cd ♗e6 14.d5 and it was dangerous for Black to play 14...♗c5, because of 15.♜g5! f6 (15...♗e8 16.e5! de 17.♖c1) 16.♜e3 ♗:e4 17.dc, as V. Ivantchuk pointed out in his comments in "New in Chess" №11 for 1988, to his game with G. Serper, from the Championship of the Armed Forces, 1988 in Frunze. Instead of all this, Ivantchuk suggested 14...cd 15.ed ♗c5. Now after 16.♜g5 Black plays 16...♗d7 with a good position. For example: 17.♖e7 ♗b5, or 17.b4 ♗a4. Instead of 14.d5 White can play 14.♜e3 and Black should better play 14...♖b8

15. ♖d2 ♔e8! With the idea to play 16...c5!, which would have been too early on move 15 because of 16.d5! ♔:b2 17. ♖c1. In the game Serper – Ivantchuk White abstained from the exchange on “c6” and retreated instead with the bishop 11. ♗c2, but Black seized the initiative and won after 11... ♖e6 12. ♖e3 ♗h8 13. ♖d5 f5 14. ef gf 15. d4 e4 16. ♖d2 ♖e7 17. ♖:e7 ♖:e7 18. d5 ♖f4 19. ♖f1? ♖g5 20. ♖g3 ♗e5 21. ♗e3 ♔g8 22. ♗h1 ♖h4 23. ♔g1 ♗d7 24. ♖f1 ♖g2 25. ♔g2 ♔g2 26. ♗g2 f4 27. ♗d4 ♗g4 28. ♗:e5+ de.

G. Sagaltchik, who is a student of mine played a very interesting game in this variation.

Shlyahin – Sagaltchik

Podolsk 1990

The first twelve moves the opponents repeated the game Serper – Ivantchuk, but instead of 13. ♖d5 I. Shlyahin preferred 13. h3.



Diagram 174

13...f5. Black starts the offence. The retro-analysis showed that Black had better delay the start of the initiative for a move and play 13... ♔b8! instead. Well, such a strange looking move with the rook can be done on the basis of some super-intuition, or if you are somehow able to anticipate the following

course of the game after 13...f5. 14. ef gf 15. d4 e4 16. d5 ef 17. de? This was a mistake. White had to capture the other knight. After 17. dc fg 18. ♖:f5 bc 19. ♖h5 ♖f6 20. ♗e3 ♖f4 The position was simplified with an approximate equality. In all these lines the position of the Black rook on “b8” was just wonderful. 17... ♗:e6 18. ♖:f3 ♖e5! 19. ♖h5 ♗f7! Both sides are dreaming about the occupation of the “f4” square with a

pawn. **20.♖d1**. The line 20.♖:f5 ♜g6 21.♗e6 ♗h4 enabled Black to obtain a decisive attack. **20...f4 21.♘g4**. If 21.♘f5 Black could increase the pressure with 21...♗g5 **21...♙h5 22.f3 ♗h4 23.♙d2**.



Diagram 175

23...♗ae8? Until now Black played perfectly and got a decisive advantage. Sagaltchik made his last move just out of common sense, but it turned out to be a serious mistake and the fight started anew. Black could sacrifice a piece with **23...♙:g4! 24.hg ♘:g4! 25.fg f3 26.gf ♗g3+ 27.♗h1 ♗h3+ 28.♗g1 ♗:f3**

winning immediately.

24.♗e4! ♙g6 25.♙e1! ♗e7! 26.♗b4 c5 27.♙:g6! ♘:g6 28.♗e4 White played several excellent "only" moves in a row and equalized. **28...♗d7 29.♗d5?!** Well, this happens rather often – White overcame the difficulties and started played carelessly. The exchange of the rooks on "e8" was a must. **29...♗:e4 30.♗:e4 d5 31.♗d3? c4 32.♗d2 d4!** Black seizes the initiative once again bringing the game to victory. **33.cd?! ♗:d4+ 34.♗:d4 ♙:d4+ 35.♙f2 ♙:b2 36.♗b1 ♙g7** (Black could still lose after 36...c3?? 37.♙d4+ ♗g8 38.♘h6 Mate.) **37.♗:b7 ♗c8! 38.♗:g7 ♘:g7 39.♙d4+ ♘f7 40.♙c3. ♗b8** White resigned.

Black has to be well prepared against the move **5.d4**, instead of 5.d3. The game can develop in the following way: **5...ed 6. 0-0 ♙e7 7.♗e1**. White prepares the advance of the "e" pawn and takes under control the "e4" square. The immediate 7.e5 doesn't promise too much after 7...♘e4 8.♘:d4 0-0 9.♘f5 d5 10.♙:c6 (10.ed ♙:f5 11.de ♘:e7 is favourable for Black) 10...bc 11.♘:e7+ ♗:e7 12.♗e1 ♗e8! with

the idea to play 13...♖d6 in answer to 13.f3. Let's go back now to 7.♖e1. Black must react precisely since the line 7...0-0 8.e5 ♖e8 9.c3 gives White a very serious initiative for the sacrificed pawn. Therefore 7...b5 8.e5. In case of 8.♗b3 d6 9.♗d5 ♖:d5 10.ed ♖e5 11.♖d4 0-0 12.♖c3 (12.f4? ♗g4! 13.♗d2 ♖c4) Black should be careful indeed, but the advantage of the two bishops gives him excellent chances in the future middle-game. Black should control the "c8 – h3" diagonal with the light square bishop, while the dark square bishop can retreat to "f8", after the previous 12...♖e8. The move 8.e5 requires from Black some exact knowledge. 8...♖:e5 9.♖:e5 d6 10.♖e1 ba.



Diagram 176

White can recapture the pawn with 11.♖:d4, or can try to play for an initiative with 11.♗g5. We are going to deal with these moves one by one.

11.♖:d4 ♗d7 12.♗f3 0-0
13.♖c6 ♗:c6 14.♗:c6 d5
15.♗:a4. If 15.♗f4 ♗d6
16.♗:d6 ♗:d6 17.♗:d6 cd.

Black has the advantage in the endgame, while after 17.♗:a4 ♖ab8 Black has a strong initiative. The game Zhikman – Zayac, Primorsko 1988, continued for 13 more moves and White was crushed: 18.b3 ♖b4 19.♗a3 ♖g4 20.g3 ♗h6 21.h4 ♗f6 22.♖f1 ♖e4 23.c3 ♖e2 24.♗c5 ♗f3 25.♖a3 ♖e3 26.♗:e3 ♖:e3 27.fe ♗:g3+ 28.♗h1 ♖e8 29.♖c2 ♖e6 30.♖ad1 ♖g6 White resigned.

White managed somehow to take back the sacrificed material but fell behind in development. Black can choose between 15...♗d6, 15...♗c5, or even 15...♖b8 with an initiative in all these lines.

We have to pay attention now to the move **11. ♖g5**. White threatens to compromise the pawn chain of the opponent exchanging on "f6". **11...0-0 12. ♖e2 h6!** A very important move, which you are going to understand a bit later. **13. ♗h4**. The line **13. ♖:e7 hg** doesn't promise White anything. **13...♗e6 14. ♘:d4 ♖d7 15. ♘:c3**. The capture of the second pawn leads to an inferior endgame for White after **15. ♘:e6 fe 16. ♖:e6+ ♖:e6 17. ♗:e6 ♖f7 18. ♗e2 g5!** (mind the move **12...h6**) **19. ♗g3 ♘d5** with a strong pressure on White's queen side. **15...a3!** It is necessary to deprive the white knight from its pawn-defence to be able in answer to **16.b3** to have the tactical stroke **16...♘d5**. Black has a good game since **17. ♘:d5 ♗:h4 18. ♘:e6 fe 19. ♖:e6+ ♖:e6 20. ♘:c7** doesn't work because of **20...♗:f2+** (Here, you can see one more reason to play **12...h6**.)

Let's continue to study: **5. 0-0 ♗e7 6. ♗e1**. Besides that move White can try **6. ♗:c6 dc** as well and now White has the choice between **7.d3** and **7. ♘:e5**. In the first case the game Huebner – Smyslov, Palma de Majorca 1970 can be very instructive: **6. ♗:c6 dc 7.d3 ♘d7 8. ♘bd2 0-0 9. ♘c4 f6 10. ♘h4 ♘c5 11.f4** (**11. ♘f5 ♗:f5 12.ef ♖d5** leads to an approximately equal position) **11...ef 12. ♗:f4 g6! 13. ♗e3 ♘e6 14. ♗g4?** It was better to retreat with the rook, which would have led to an about equal position after **14. ♗f1 f5! 15.ef ♘g7 16. ♘f3 ♘:f5. 14...♘g7 15. ♘:g6** This was obligatory in order to meet the threat **15...f5. 15...♗:g4! 16. ♘:e7+ ♖:e7 17. ♖:g4 f5 18. ♖g5 ♖:g5 19. ♗:g5 fe 20.de ♗e8** and Black had no problems to win with an exchange up. You can see the whole game in V. Smyslov's book "Looking for Harmony".

The other move **7. ♘e5** is connected with a trap. If Black plays **7...♘:e4 8. ♗e1 ♘f6** (**8...♖d4** is dangerous after **9. ♘f3 ♖:f2+ 10. ♖h1** threatening **11.d4** and **12. ♗e3**) **9. ♖e2 ♗e6** (**9...0-0? 10. ♘:c6**) **10.d3 0-0?**

Now, White can win a pawn with **11. ♖:f7!**. Sometime ago the late Lithuanian master E. Chukaev told me a rather amusing story. He used to play blitz-games with E. Gufeld, to spend his free time, for 50 kopeeks a game. They reached the position on the diagram rather often.



Diagram 177

E. Gufeld played always the move **11. ♖c3**, after which Black usually took the initiative. And now in their tournament game the unsuspecting Chukaev played the same line again. Gufeld played now **11. ♖:f7!** and exclaimed "This is to repay you for all the 50 kopeeks-coins!" The game, nevertheless ended

in a draw...

The easiest way for Black to achieve a good position is to retreat with the knight to "d6" on move 8. The game Yuferov – Shereshevsky, Minsk 1973 went on: 8. ♖e1 ♖d6 9. ♖c3 0-0 10. d3 f6 11. ♖f3 ♗g4 12. h3 ♗h5 13. ♗f4 ♖d7 14. ♖e2 ♖fe8 15. ♖:e6+ ♖:e6 16. ♖:e6 ♗f7 17. ♖ae1 ♗:f3 18. ♗:d6 cd 19. g ♗f8 20. ♖:e8 ♖:e8 21. ♖:e8 ♗:e8 22. ♗g2 d5 23. ♗g3 ♗d6+ 24. ♗g4 g6 25. f4 ♗c5 26. ♖d1 f5+ 27. ♗f3 d4 28. ♗g3 ♗d6 White resigned. White must play 29. h4 to neutralize the threat 29...g5 (If 29. ♗f3 ♗f7 and Black's king marches to the "h" pawn.), which will be met by 29...♗f7 30. f3 h6 31. ♖f2 ♗e6, or 31...♗b4 and Black wins easily.

We are going to study now:

1. e4 e5 2. ♖f3 ♖c6 3. ♗b5 a6 4. ♗a4 ♖f6 5. 0-0 ♗e7 6. ♖e1 b5 7. ♗b3 d6 8. c3. Sometimes White plays here 8. a4. This is what happened in the game V. Kupreitchik – Shereshevsky, Melbourne 1988. 8...♗d7 9. c3 0-0 10. d4 h6 11. ♖bd2 ♖e8 12. ♖f1 ♗f8 13. ♖g3 ♖a5 14. ♗c2 c5 15. h3?! ♖c7 16. ♖h4? cd

17.cd ed 18.ab ab 19.♖hf5 d5 20.♗:d4 and here Black blundered with 20...de? and White took the initiative and won. Instead of 20...de? Black could have played 20...♗c5! (a move found by V. Ivantchuk) with an almost decisive advantage.

8...0-0 9.h3. Lately White plays much more often 9.d4, without being afraid of the pin 9...♗g4. Unfortunately some of the recommendations that my pupils used to follow were reevaluated by the contemporary theory, so I would omit them. **9...♗a5 10.♗c2 c5 11.d4 ♖c7 12.♗bd2 ♗d8.** We have one more move to reach the critical position. As I have already mentioned White plays 13.♖f1 very rarely and usually prefers to block the centre with **13.d5.** Besides that White sometimes plays the timid 13.a3, or 13.b3 against which Black should better exchange twice on "d4", which leads to one of the typical positions of the Chigorin variation and the position of Black's rook on "d8" might come very handy.

The move 13.d5 leads to one of the standard positions of the Ruy Lopez in which the plans for actions of both sides are almost exhausted in theory and practice. A. Rubinstein, back in 1925 in the tournament in Baden-Baden found a very deep strategical plan for defence. He was Black against Thomas and the game continued: 1.e4 e5 2.♖f3 ♗c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♗f6 5. 0-0 ♗e7 6.♗e1 b5 7.♗b3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3 ♗a5 10.♗c2 c5 11.d4 ♖c7 12.♗bd2 ♗c6 13.d5 ♗d8 14.♖f1 ♗e8 15.a4 ♗b8 16.ab ab 17.g4 g6 18.♗g3 ♗g7 19.♗h1 f6 20.♗g1 ♗f7 21.♖f1 ♗d7 22.♗e3 ♗a8.

Bogoljubov – Rubinstein

14.a4 ♗b8 15.c4 b4 16.b3 ♗e8 17.g4 g6 18.♗h1 ♗g7 19.♗g1 h5 20.♖f1 hg 21.hg f6 22.♗e3 ♗f7 23.♗h4 ♗h8 24.f4 ef 25.♗ef5 ♗:f5 26.gf g5.

In both games Black obtained a satisfactory position. Nowadays, Rubinstein's plan is considered to be insufficient

for equality. White is not in a hurry to push the "g" pawn, but tries instead to reach the following pawn structure:



Diagram 178

The integral part of White's plan will be to prepare f2 – f4. After the exchange e5:f4 the White pieces will have an access to the "d4" square, while if Black doesn't exchange White can push f4 – f5. I have seen a lot of games like that. One of the most instructive is Karpov – Unzicker, Nice 1974. I am going

to include it here without any comments, since we are studying this variation from the point of view of Black, but if the reader wants to get some explanations to the logical and beautiful play of White, this game can be found in the collection of Karpov's games, commented by the world champion №12.

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5. 0-0 ♗e7 6.♗e1 b5 7.♗b3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3 ♘a5 10.♗c2 c5 11.d4 ♗c7 12.♗bd2 ♘c6 13.d5 ♘d8 14.a4 ♗b8 15.ab ab 16.b4 ♗b7 17.♘f1 ♗d7 18.♗e3 ♗a8 19.♗d2 ♗fc8 20.♗d3 g6 21.♘g3 ♗f8 22.♗a2 c4 23.♗b1 ♗d8 24.♗a7 ♘e8 25.♗c2 ♘c7 26.♗ea1 ♗e7 27.♗b1 ♗e8 28.♘e2 ♘d8 29.♘h2 ♗g7 30.f4 f6 31.f5 g5 32.♗c2 ♗f7 33.♘g3 ♗b7 34.♗d1 h6 35.♗h5 ♗e8 36.♗d1 ♘d8 37.♗a3 ♗f8 38.♗1a2 ♗g8 39.♘g4! ♗f8 40.♘e3 ♗g8 41.♗:f7+ ♘:f7 42.♗h5 ♘d8 43.♗g6 ♗f8 44.♘h5. Black resigned.

B. Spassky tried to use Rubinstein's system against Karpov in the championship of USSR 1973, but failed to equalize. The opening and the early middle game were played like this :

12. $\text{d}b\text{d}2$ $\text{c}6$ 13. $\text{d}5$ $\text{d}8$ 14. $\text{a}4$ $\text{b}8$ 15. ab . Probably White should not be in a hurry to open the "a" file. 15. $\text{b}4$ looks better.

15... ab 16. $\text{b}4$ $\text{c}4$ 17. $\text{f}1$ $\text{e}8$ 18. $\text{d}3\text{h}2$ $\text{f}6$ 19. $\text{f}4$ $\text{f}7$ 20. $\text{f}3$ $\text{g}6$ 21. $\text{f}5$ $\text{g}7$ 22. $\text{g}4$ $\text{d}7$ 23. $\text{e}3$ $\text{a}8$ 24. $\text{d}2$ $\text{b}7$ 25. $\text{a}c1$ $\text{a}2$ 26. $\text{d}g3$ $\text{a}f\text{a}8$ 27. $\text{h}4$ Black's position is cramped.

In our case Black's rook is already on "d8", so Rubinstein's plan is out of the question. Black must find some other ways to get counterplay, and the only place to look for that is the queen side.

13... $\text{c}4!$



Diagram 179

If now the "b" pawn had been on the "b3" square, White would have had the move $\text{b}3 - \text{b}4$ restricting the opponent on the queen side. Therefore Black should try to push as quickly as possible the pawns "a" and "b", and to try to bring the knight to "c5". Our analysis of the position looked approximately like that:

14. $\text{f}1$. In case of 14. $\text{g}4$ Black had the standard counter-stroke -14... $\text{h}5!$

14... $\text{d}b7$ 15. $\text{d}3\text{h}2$. In this moment 15. $\text{g}4$ is much more sensible, but Black can play 15... $\text{h}5$ anyhow. Now if 16. $\text{d}3\text{h}2$ hg 17. hg $\text{d}h7$ followed by 18... $\text{e}g5$, and if 16. gh $\text{e}:\text{h}3$ 17. $\text{d}3\text{h}2$ in the game Akopian – Alexandrov, Dimitrovgrad 1988, Black played 17... $\text{g}6$ 18. $\text{d}g3$ $\text{d}c5?$, overlooking the surprising manoeuvre $\text{d}d1 - \text{d}2! - \text{h}6$. Instead of 18... $\text{d}c5?$ Black had to play 18... $\text{e}g7$ with a good position.

15... $\text{a}5$ 16. $\text{f}4$ White threatens to push the "f" pawn even further, so Black should try some counter-measures.

16... $\text{d}c5!$ 17. $\text{f}5$.



Diagram 180

17... ♖f:e4! – This is the key move of all Black's set-up. The play could continue **18. ♗:e4 ♜:e4 19. ♝:e4 ♘:f5 20. ♞e1 ♘d3**. Black has two pawns for the sacrificed piece, the two bishops – advantage and plenty of opportunities for active play. Besides that, White's "d5" pawn is very weak. I wanted

somehow to clarify who was better in this position, so I asked my pupils to play training games with quicker than usual time-control in the position after move 20. All the games ended with a win for Black.

Grandmaster Yusupov sacrificed once a piece almost analogous to this, since I had shown him this interesting piece-sacrifice before.

**Kinderman – Yusupov
Hamburg 1991**

13.d5 c4 14. ♖f1 ♜b7 15. ♗g3 a5 16. ♜h2 ♜c5 17.f4 b4 18. ♖f3 ♝b8 19.cb ab 20.b3 c3 21.f5 ♘a6 22. ♜h1 ♞dc8 23. ♖f2 ♞a7 24.g4



Diagram 181

24... ♖f:e4! 25. ♗:e4 ♜:e4 26. ♝:e4 c2 27. ♞e1 ♞c5 28.a3 ♞:d5 29.ab ♘b7 30. ♞e3 ♘d8! 31. ♞d3 ♞c6 32.b5 ♞:b5 33. ♜d2 ♘b6 34. ♞e3 ♘:e3 35. ♞:e3 ♞c6 36. ♜f1 ♞g2+ 37. ♜e1 ♞g1+ 38. ♜e2 ♘g2 39. ♞d3 d5 40. ♞g3 e4 41. ♞e5 ♝:b3 White resigned.

In conclusion I will offer the reader some of my pupils games, which were abundant with a very tense and complex fight. I am not going to annotate them, since it would be very difficult and time-consuming to analyse such complicated games full of intense struggle. I think that it would be useful for the reader to have some feeling for the rhythm of the fight in this variation, and although the examples that I am going to show you are probably full of imprecisions and mistakes for both sides, Black can be more than happy with the final results.

In one of the games the then – world -champion Maya Chiburdanidze lost against the not so familiar master-candidate (now – a master) Tatyana Zagorskaya. Elena Zayac was close to a victory against the present world champion – the Chinese Xie Jun, and the games of Oleg Romanov and Alexander Zazhogine are very instructive for the tendencies of this variation.

Chiburdanidze – Zagorskaya
Moscow 1981

13.d5 c4 14.♘f1 ♘b7 15.♘g3 a5 16.♘h2 ♘c5 17.♘g4 ♘:g4 18.hg b4 19.♘f5 ♘ab8 20.♘e3 b3 21.ab cb 22.♘b1 g6 23.g5 ♘h5 24.♘h3 ♘f8 25.♘f3 ♘b7 26.g4 ♘f4 27.♘:f4 ef 28.♘:f4 gf 29.♘:f5 ♘g7 30.♘:h7+ ♘f8 31.♘f3 ♘e7 32.♘f5 a4 33.♘a3 ♘d7 34.f4 ♘c5 35.g6 ♘e8 36.♘h1 ♘b5 37.♘f3 ♘g8 38.gf+ ♘:f7 39.♘:f7 ♘:f7 40.g5 ♘e7 41.♘h5 ♘e8 42.♘f3 ♘h8
White resigned.

Xie Jun – Zayac
Adelaide 1988

13.d5 c4 14.♘f1 ♘b7 15.♘g3 a5 16.♘h2 ♘c5 17.♘f1 b4 18.f4 b3 19.ab cb 20.♘b1 a4 21.♘f3 ♘f8 22.♘h1 ♘d7 23.♘e3 ♘a6 24.♘f2 ♘c8 25.♘a3 ♘f8 26.♘f3 ♘b5 27.♘e1 ef 28.♘:f4 ♘d3 29.♘:d3 ♘:d3 30.♘f1 ♘c5 31.♘d2 ♘aa8 32.♘ea1 ♘e8 33.♘f3 ♘fd7 34.♘e3 ♘e5 35.♘f1 ♘ed7

36.♙:c5 ♘:c5 37.♖f3 g6 38.♘df1 ♙g7 39.♘h2 ♖e7 40.♖f1 ♘:e4 41.♘:e4 ♖:e4 42.♖:f7+ ♘h8 43.♖b7 ♖e2 44.♖c6 ♖:b2 45.♖:a4 ♖ac8 46.♖:d6 ♖cd8 47.♖a6 ♖:c3 48.♖b4 ♖:c2 49.♘f3 ♖:d5 50.♘h2 b2 51.♖b7 ♖d3 52.♖c6 ♖ed8 53.♖e1 ♖f5 54.♖:g6 ♖d6+ 55.♖:d6 ♖:d6 56.♖e8+ ♙f8 57.♖b4 and White in his turn had an extra pawn, although the game ended in a draw anyway. If Black had played 53...h5, instead of 53...♖f5?, the passed pawn "b2" would force an easy win.

Shilov – Romanov

Volgograd 1988

13.d5 c4 14.♘f1 ♘b7 15.g4 ♘c5 16.♘g3 h5 17.♘h2 h4 18.♘f5 ♘h7 19.f4 ef 20.♙:f4 ♙:f5 21.gf ♙g5 22.♖g4 ♙f6 23.♘f3 ♖e8 24.♘h1 b4 25.♖e3 bc 26.♖g1 ♖e7 27.♘h4 ♘d3 28.♙:d3 cd 29.♙h6 ♙g5 30.♙:g5 ♖:g5 31.bc ♖:g4 32.hg ♘f6 33.♖d3 The opponents agreed to a draw. Black seems to be slightly better though.

Pereligin – Romanov

Beltzy 1988

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5. 0-0 ♙e7 6.♖e2 b5 7.♙b3 0-0 8.c3 d6 9.h3 ♘a5 10.♙c2 c5 11.d4 ♖c7 12.d5 c4 13.♙e3 ♘b7 14.♘bd2 ♘c5 15.♘h2 a5 16.f4 ♖b8 17.f5 b4 18.g4 bc 19.bc ♖b2 20.♖d1 ♙d7 21.g5 ♖:c2 22.♖:c2 ♙a4 23.♖b1 ♖b8 24.♖e1 ♘f:e4 25.f6 ♙f8 26.♘:e4 ♘:e4 27.fg ♙:g7 28.♘g4 ♙c2 29.♘f6+ ♘h8 30.♖c1 ♙d3 31.♖f3 ♖b7 32.♖h4 ♙:f6 33.gf ♖g8 + 34.♘h1 ♖:d5 35.♖g1 ♘g5 36.♖gg3 ♙e2. White resigned.

G. Gurevic – Romanov

Minsk 1991

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5. 0-0 ♙e7 6.♖e1 b5 7.♙b3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3 ♘a5 10.♙c2 c5 11.d4 ♖c7 12.a3 ♖d8 13.d5 c4 14.♘bd2 ♘b7 15.♘f1 ♘c5 16.♘g3 a5 17.♖f1 ♙a6 18.♙e3 ♖db8 19.♘h2 b4 20.ab ab 21.f4 ♘d3 22.♙:d3 cd 23.fe de 24.♘g4 ♘:g4 25.♖:g4 ♙c8 26.♖f3 f6 27.♖:a8 ♖:a8 28.♘h5 bc 29.bc ♖a6 30.♙d2 ♖c4 31.♘h1 g6 32.♘g3 ♖a2 33.d6 ♙d8 34.♖e3 ♖e6

35. ♖:d3 ♜a6 36. ♖:d5 ♖:d5 37. ed ♜:f1 38. ♜:f1 ♞a1. White resigned.

Berzinsh – Zazhogine

Minsk 1988

13. d5 c4 14. ♜f1 ♜b7 15. ♜3h2 ♜c5 16. ♖f3 a5 17. ♜g4 b4
18. ♜g3 b3 19. ab cb 20. ♜b1 ♜:g4 21. hg a4 22. ♜f5 ♜f8 23. g3
a3 24. ♞:a3 ♞:a3 25. ba ♜a4 26. ♜d2 ♖c5 27. ♜g2 ♜b2 28. c4
♖:a3 29. ♖c3 ♜:f5 30. gf ♞c8 31. ♜c1 ♜a4 32. ♖a5 b2
33. ♜:b2 ♖:b2 34. ♖:a4 ♖c3 35. ♖d1 ♞:c4 36. ♞h1 ♞b4
37. ♖h5 h6 38. ♖g4 ♜h7 39. f6 g6 40. ♖d7 ♜g8 41. ♖d8 ♖d2
42. ♖c8 ♞b2 43. ♞f1 ♖e2 44. ♖c1 h5 45. ♜g1 h4 46. ♜d3 ♖f3
47. ♖d1 ♖:f6 48. gh ♖:h4. Black had the advantage, but failed
to turn it into a whole point and the game ended in a draw on
move 73.

The Scottish Gambit

I don't think that such an opening can be the object of any serious theoretical discussions. Black should have one well-prepared scheme, which should not be necessarily top-fashion, but it should be unpleasant for the opponent at least psychologically. I will try to illustrate this with an example:

Joric – Shereshevsky

Valjevo 1991

1. e4 e5 2. ♜f3 ♜c6 3. d4 ed 4. c3 ♜f6!? This move has been rejected by the contemporary theory, but it is much better than its reputation might tell. Black can reach this position via the Ponziani opening as well. **5. e5 ♜e4 6. ♖e2 f5 7. ef d5 8. ♜:d4 ♜:d4 9. cd ♜b4+ 10. ♜d2 ♜:d2+ 11. ♜:d2 0-0 12. ♜:e4 ♞e8.**



Diagram 182

I analysed this position a long time ago and I couldn't find any clear advantage for White although the diagrammed position looked rather dangerous for Black. It is possible that White should better play 13.0-0-0 ♖:e4 14.♗c2 ♜:f6 15.♙d3 ♖:d4 16.♙:h7+ ♘h8 with an unclear sharp position. The Yugoslavian

player tried something different: **13. 0-0-0 ♖:e4 14.♗h5 g6 15.♗g5.** After 15.f7+ ♘g7 16.f8♗+ ♜:f8 17.♗:d5 ♗f4+ 18.♙b1 c6 or 18...♙f5 Black has the initiative. **15...♙f5!** A very strong move, which threatens 16...♖g4, and if 16.f3 ♖e6 17.g4 – then the simple 17...♖:f6.

16.f3 ♖e6 17.♙d3 ♖:f6 18.♙b1 ♙:d3 + 19.♖:d3 ♖e6 20.♗:d8+ ♖:d8.



Diagram 183

Finally, a four-rook endgame has been reached in which Black is better because his rooks occupy the open "e" file, and additionally Black has the better pawn distribution on the queen side. White had at that moment less than half an hour for the 20 moves, necessary to reach the time control.

21.♖d2? The activity of the pieces is very important in the rook endgames. White chooses to play passively relying on the unassailability of his position. 21.♖b3!? b6 22.♖c1 was necessary, to try to create weak points in Black's pawn chain on the queen side.

21...**♖de8** 22.**♗c2 ♗f7** 23.**♖f1 ♗f6** 24.**♖df2 ♗e7** 25.**♗d2 ♗d6** 26.**g3 b6**. Black's plan becomes clear. He intends to prepare the pawn advance c7 – c5, and after the exchange dc – bc to push forward the "a" pawn. White will be forced to play a2 – a3, when the black pawn reaches the "a4" square and then the white "b2" pawn will become weak. Black is going to combine the pressure on the "b2" pawn with a pawn advance in the centre which is going to give him a decisive positional advantage.

27.**♗d1 ♖e3** 28.**♗d2 a5** 29.**f4 a4** 30.**g4!** White begins to play better. He understands that the passive play will lead to an unavoidable loss, so he tries to create some counterplay on the king side.

30...**♖3e4** 31.**♗d3 c5** 32.**dc+ bc** 33.**♗d2 c4** 34.**a3 ♖b8** 35.**♗c2 d4** 36.**f5! d3+?** The black pawns in the centre lose their mobility with this clumsy move. It was much better to take on "g4" immediately.

37.**♗c1 ♖:g4** 38.**f6 ♖e4** 39.**f7 ♖f8** 40.**♗d2 ♖e7** 41.**♗c3** As a consequence of Black's mistake, the white king has an excellent square on "c3" which combined with the strong "f7" pawn gives White a serious counterplay.

41...**♗d5** 42.**♖f4 ♖e4!** 43.**♖1f2**. It was not possible to take the pawn – 43.**♖:e4 ♗:e4** 44.**♗c4**, because of 44...**d2** 45.**♗c3 ♗e3**.

43...**♗e5** 44.**♖4f3**.



Diagram 184

Now I thought for some time and played **44...g5!** with the idea to play **♖f4** next. **45.♖f5+ ♗e6** **46.♖f6+ ♗e7** **47.♖c6**. The key position. What should Black do now? I intended at first **47...♖b8**, since the tactical trick **48.f8 ♖+ ♖:f8** **49.♖c7+** didn't work because of **49...♗d6**, and

the white rook on "c7" was hanging. On the other hand 47...♖b8 threatens 48...♖b3+, as a tactical threat, and 48...♗f8 as a terribly strong positional threat. White must play – 48.♖:c4 and after 48...♖b3+ 49.♗d2 ♖:b2+ 50.♗:d3 ♖:f2 51.♖:e4+ ♗:f7 52.♖:a4 ♖:h2 and I thought that Black should win. Well, I had been probably right, but instead of 52.♖:a4?, White could play the strong 52.h4!, and the game should end in a draw. The next move that I was thinking over was – 47...♖e2. White should answer with 48.♖:e2 de 49.♗d2 ♗:f7 50.♖:c4. The game might continue like this: 50...♖b8 51.♖c2 ♖e8 52.♗e1 ♖e4 (52...♖e3!?). I didn't like this position because White can play 53.♖c3 and 54.b3 and White should be able to draw. I had to find a third opportunity – **47...♖d8! 48.♖:c4**. There was nothing better, because of the positional threat 48...♗f8. **48...♖:c4+ 49.♗:c4 ♗f8!** Of course not 49...d2? 50.f8♖+ with a draw.

50.♖d2. The only move. The king and pawn endgame after 50.♗c3? d2! 51.♖:d2 ♖:d2 52.♗:d2 ♗:f7 was lost for White i.e. 53.♗c3 h5 54.b4 ab 55.♗:b3 (55.a4 ♗e7) 55...g4 56.♗c3 h4 57.♗d2 g3 58.hg h3 and Black's pawn queens. **50...h5!** That was another only move. Black has no time to capture the "f7" pawn, since White would play 51.b4! making a draw. **51.b4 ab 52.♗:b3 g4 53.♗b2?** White loses a tempo in the time-trouble and enables Black to win effortlessly. (It was necessary to play **53.a4! h4 54.a5 ♗:f7**. Black should lose some time to capture the pawn, since 54...g3 55.hg hg 56.a6 g2? doesn't work because of 57.♖:g2 threatening to check on "g8".

55.a6. In case of 55.♗c4 55...g3 is possible and in the line 56.hg hg 57.a6 g2 58.♖d1 d2 59.a7 ♖a8 Black should be able to win. **55...♖a8**. Now there is not much sense in 55...g3? 56.hg hg, because of 57.a7, and if 55...♗e6 – then the simple 56.♗c4 threatening to take on "d3". After 55...♖a8 **56.♖:d3** (56.♖q2 ♖:a6 57.♖:q4 ♖d6) **56...♖:a6**.



Diagram 185

Black kept excellent chances to realize his tiny material advantage, because the white king was far from the enemy pawns, but nevertheless White should have played exactly this) Now the game ended in the following way:

53...h4 54.a4 ♖f7. The black king comes to help the pawns.
55.a5 ♗e6 56.♗c3 ♗e5 57.♞d1 ♗e4 58.♗d2 ♗f3 59.♞f1+ ♗g2 60.♞f4 g3 61.hg h3 62.♞h4 h2 63.a6 h1 ♜ 64.♞:h1 ♗:h1 65.g4 ♗g2 66.g5 ♗f3. White resigned.

The French Defence

After the moves 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 White has two principled continuations 3.♗c3 and 3.♗d2. In the first case my pupils tend to play the rare variation MacKetchon, although they have in reserve a scheme with the move 3...♠b4.

I am not going to deal extensively with these sharp opening variations. I would like just to mention that the last evaluation of the theory in these lines hasn't been done yet, besides Black has always the option to try to find something new a little bit away from the focus of the theoretical interest.

In the line 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♗d2, Black can choose between 3...♗f6, 3...♗c6, 3...♠e7 and 3...c5. We prefer the last opportunity since in positions of this type – with an isolated "d5" pawn, the outcome of the game is determined not so much by the theoretical knowledge, as by the deep understanding of the strategical problems and the practical

strength of playing. In this chapter we are going to deal only with games of P. Korzubov, who has mastered very well positions of this type, as well as of games of the author of the book.

So, **1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2 c5 4.ed ed.**



Diagram 186

White has the option in the diagrammed position to play either **5.♗b5+**, or **5.♘f3**. We are going to start with the bishop check – **5.♗b5+ ♗d7**. The exchange of the light square bishop, the most passive black piece in positions with an isolated “d5” pawn, represents one of the important strategical

ideas for Black. White, in turn should strive for the exchange of the dark square bishops. In the line **5.♗b5+ ♘c6 6.♘f3 ♗d6 7. 0-0 ♘e7 8.dc ♗:c5 9.♘b3 ♗d6 (9...♗b6 10.♞e1 and 11.♗e3)** White usually tries to exchange the dark square bishops with **♗c1 – g5 – h4 – g3**. Lets go back to **5...♗d7**. White has the option to exchange the bishops immediately or, to win temporarily a pawn with **6.♞e2+**. We have to try to study first the most principled continuation. **6.♞e2+ ♗e7 7.dc ♘f6 8.♘gf3 0-0 9.♘b3 ♞e8 10.♗e3 a6**. White has two options once again i.e. to take or not to take:

Kasparov – Korzubov

Tashkent 1978

11.♗:d7 ♘b:d7 12. 0-0 ♘:c5 13.♞ad1 ♞c7!?



Diagram 187

The opening stage is almost over. Both sides have accomplished their development and are about to enter the middle game. White has somewhat better pawn structure, but Black pieces are better coordinated and seem to be more active. In general the chances for both sides are

about equal.

14. ♖:c5 ♗:c5 15. ♘d4 ♖e4! In positions of this type, particularly when there are four knights on the board, Black should not occupy the "e" file with a knight on "e4". Two knights can not occupy one square – "e4" simultaneously! With his last move Korzubov created the threat 16... ♘g4, which can not be parried with 16.f3?, since after 16... ♘g4! 17.fg ♖ae8 Black recaptures the sacrificed piece with an advantage. **16.h3 ♖ae8 17. ♖d3 ♘h5!** The Black knight has the option for two tactical strokes – ♘g3 and ♘f4. **18. ♖c3 ♘g3** Black had also some other interesting moves like 18... ♖b6 or 18... ♘f4. In the last case such a position may arise: 18... ♘f4 19. ♖fe1 ♖e7 20. ♘f5 ♖g5 21. ♗:f4 ♗:f2 + 22. ♗:f2 ♖:f5 23. ♖:e4 ♖:e4 24. ♖:d5 ♖:f4 + with an eventual draw.

19. ♖fe1 ♖e7 20.a3. (20... ♗b4 was threatening.) **20...g6 21. ♘h2 ♗:d4.** 21... ♗d6? was bad because of 22.fg ♖:e3 23. ♖:e3 ♖:e3 24. ♖:e3 ♖:e3 25. ♘f3 and White was winning a pawn. **22. ♖:d4.**



Diagram 188

Korzubov decided to force a draw now and played **22...♖:d4**. Black could have retreated simply with the knight to "f5" and then White would have the choice between **23.♗:d5 ♜:e3**, with a draw, or **23.♗:e4 de 24.♙c1** with a position which could be played on, but Black was not worse. G. Kasparov

was playing very impressively at the time, so Black decided to avoid the risk and tried to find a sure way to reach the draw – **23.♙:d4 ♜f5 24.♙:d5 ♖c7+ 25.♞g1 ♖:c2 26.♙:b7 ♜:e3 27.♖b6!** This was rather unexpected for Korzubov who had calculated only **27.♗:e3 ♖c1+**, or **27.fe ♖d2!**

27... ♖d2? Black was disappointed with his mistake and failed to find the right move. The draw was reached easily with **27...♗e6!** White has nothing better than **28.♖d8+ ♞g7 29.♖d4+**, but then Black interposes with the rook **29...♗f6!** and after **30.♖:e3 ♖:b2** the draw is inevitable. Now Black is left with a pawn down in a queen endgame. **28.♗:e3 ♗:e3 29.fe h5 30.♞h2 ♖:e2?** Black loses the control over the "d8" square and deprives himself from the move **h5 – h4**. It was necessary to push the "h" pawn immediately. **31.b4 ♞g7**. The rest of the game was played in a time-trouble **32.a4 g5 33.b5 ab 34.ab h4 35.♖d4+ ♞g6 36.b6 ♖e1 37.♖d6+** Black resigned.

Kuporosov – Korzubov

Sochi 1980

The opponents repeated the first 13 moves from the previous game.



Diagram 189

14.h3 Kasparov preferred 14.♖:c5. **14...♗a4!** The knight exerts strong pressure on the queen side from this square, while the "e4" outpost remains vacant for the other knight or the rook. **15.c3 ♗ad8 16.♗bd4 ♗e4 17.♙c2 ♗b6 18.♗f5 ♗f6 19.♗d4 ♗c4 20.♗fe1 ♗:d4 21.♗3:d4 ♙b6.**



Diagram 190

Black has nothing to complain about. He has already some initiative. **22.♗e2 g6 23.♗h6+ ♗g7 24.♗g4 h5 25.♗h2 ♗f6!** Korzubov is threatening once again the "b2" pawn with this move, setting up a subtle trap in the process. **26.♙b3** (26.♗de1? was losing after 26...♙:b2!) **26...♗:e2**

27.♙:b6 ♗:b6 28.♗:e2 ♗e8 29.♗f1 ♗c4 30.b3 ♗e5. White has some problems already. **31.♗f4 ♗d8 32.c4!?** V.



Diagram 191

Kuporosov makes the right decision to clarify the position by some tactical means, otherwise Black can increase his positional advantage at leisure. **32...d4 33.♗f3 ♗:f3 34.gf.**

White has a lot of pawn weaknesses now on the king side and the enemy isolated

pawn has become a passed one. White is ready to try to win this pawn with 35. ♖e2 d3 36. ♖f4 Korzubov finds a way to neutralize his opponent's threats.

34... ♖h7! The knight is heading for the "e6" square via "g5", with tempo.

35. ♖e2 ♖g5 36. ♖:d4 ♖:d4 37. ♖:d4 ♖:h3 38. c5 ♖f4 39. c6 bc 40. ♖:c6 ♖d5.



Diagram 192

Black's advantage is out of the question, but White can still manage to hold the position because of the reduced material. Kuporosov managed to exchange the pawns on the queen side (two for one) and drew the knight endgame with pawns only on the king side.

Kapengut – Shereshevsky

Minsk 1976

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. ♖d2 c5 4. ed ed 5. ♗b5+ ♗d7 6. ♖e2+ ♗e7 7. dc ♖f6 8. ♖b3 0-0 9. ♗e3 ♖e8 10. 0-0-0 White castled queen side instead of 10. ♖f3.

10... a6 11. ♗:d7 ♖b:d7 12. ♖f3 ♖:c5.



Diagram 193

The absence of the light square bishops can bring only joy to the Black player. The position of the white king on the queen side is hardly safer than on the king side and we are going to verify this very soon.

13. ♖fd4? It would have been better to occupy the "d4"

square with the other knight, since the position of ♖b3 gives Black some additional options for active counterplay.

13...♖ce4!? 14.♖f5 a5!? Now, this manoeuvre has become standard, but then I thought a long time to find it. The weakening of the "b5" square is amply compensated by Black's initiative.

15.♖bd4. In case of 15.♖:e7+ ♖:e7, Black threatened not only to march forward with the "a" pawn, but also 16...♖:f2.

15...a4 16.a3 ♖ac8! Black must play tactically, creating threats in positions with an isolated pawn. The rook move aims at the increase of pressure on the queen side, and if White plays 17.♖b5, Black can suddenly make a blow on the other side with **17...♖g4! 17.f3?**. White wanted to consolidate somehow, but made a serious mistake.



Diagram 194

17...♖c3! This sacrifice became possible, because of the unstable position of the white bishop. **18.bc ♖:a3 19.♖b1!** The best chance. 19.♖d2 ♖b2 is hopelessly lost for White. **19...g6 20.♖h6+ ♖g7 21.♖b5** The only move. **21...♖:e3 22.♖hf5+ gf 23.♖:f5 ♖f8 24.♖:e3 ♖c5 25.♖:b7 ♖c7**

26.♖b5 ♖c5 27.♖b7 ♖c7? Draw, by repetition of moves. Black had very little time, so I rejected the natural move 27...♖e8, because of the following variation which seemed forced: 28.♖a2 ♖:e3 29.♖b8+ ♖g7 30.♖g3+ ♖h8 31.♖b8+ ♖g8 32.♖he1 ♖:c3 33.♖e5+ ♖:e5 34.♖:e5. Subconsciously I continued the variation with 34...♖:c3 35.♖d:d5 and I thought that the position was unclear. I had missed completely the fact that the "c3" pawn had vanished from the board, accordingly after 34...♖b4 White had a hopeless position.

We are going to study now games in which White played 6.♖e2+ but later refrained from the exchange of the light square bishops.

Short – Korzubov
Sas van Gent 1978

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2 c5 4.ed ed 5.♗b5+ ♗d7 6.♖e2+ ♗e7 7.dc ♘f6 8.♘gf3 0-0 9.♘b3 ♖e8 10.♗e3 a6 11.♗d3 ♗a4! Black must get rid of the light square bishop. **12.♘fd4 ♘bd7 13.0-0.** There are some games in which White castled queen side here. We are going to deal with them later. **13...♘:c5?!** This is inconsequential. It was necessary to exchange beforehand on "b3". Black had an excellent position in the game A. Ivanov. – Shereshevsky, Minsk 1985 after **13...♗:b3 14.ab ♗:c5 15.c3 ♗:d4! 16.cd ♘b8! 17.♖f3 h6,** and Black's knights are not worse than the White's bishops, while White's pawn structure is evidently compromised. The move chosen by Korzubov didn't cause any problems for Black either. The game continued: **14.♘:c5 ♗:c5 15.♖f3 ♗d7 16.c3 ♖c7 17.h3 ♘e4 18.♖fe1 ♖e5.**



Diagram 195

Black threatened to seize the initiative with 19...♗d6. The English player decided to exchange the queens, which was almost identical in this position to a draw offer. **19.♖f4.** If 19.♗f4 Black would have retreated with the queen to "e7" with the idea 20...♗:d4.

19...♖:f4 20.♗:f4 ♗:d4 21.cd h6!/? 22.f3 ♘g5 23.♗:g5 hg 24.♖f2 f6 25.♗g6 ♖:e1 26.♖:e1 ♖f8 27.♖c1 ♖c8 28.♖:c8+ ♗:c8 29.♖g3. Draw.

A. Ivanov – Korzubov

Kiev 1983

White preferred to castle queen side on move 13 – 13. 0-0-0. The game continued. 13...♙:b3 14.♘:b3 a5 15.a3 a4 16.♞d4 ♙:c5.



Diagram 196

17.♙b5 White played in the diagrammed position 17.♙f3 in the games : Gelfand – Shereshevsky, Minsk 1983 and Yakovich – Shereshevsky, Volgograd 1985. Black answered with 17...♘e5 and now the two games developed along different lines. 18.♙g3 ♙b6 19.h3? ♘e4! 20.♙:e4 ♘c4!

and White's position became hopeless in the first game, while Yakovich played 18.♙h3 ♙b6 19.♘f5 ♙:e3+ 20.♘:e3 ♖ac8 21.♙h4? d4! 22.♘f5 ♘:d3 + 23.♖:d3 ♙c5 24.♘:d4 ♖e4 and White could doubtlessly resign. Lets go back to the game Ivanov – Korzubov. 17...♙b6 18.♖he1 g6 19.c3 ♖e7 20.♙:b7?! White doesn't have enough space, but he has two bishops and some control over the "b5" square. White didn't need however, to give up his two advantages voluntarily. Now Black obtains the chance to get an indisputable control over the white squares on the queen side. 20.♙c2!? was not good because of 20...♖:e3! 21.fe ♙:e4, but still to exchange the light square bishop was definitely bad. 20...♘:d7 21.♙f3 ♖e4! Black is better. 22.♘c2 ♘e5 23.♙:c5 ♙:c5 24.♙g3. If 24.♙f6 ♖e8 25.♖:e4 de 26.♖d8 ♖:d8 27.♙:d8+ ♙g7 Black is clearly better. 24...♖e8 25.♘b4 ♘c4 The consequences of the unfavourable exchange of the bishop are obvious now. 26.♖:e4 de 27.♖d5 ♙b6 28.♖d4 e3! It is probable that Ivanov failed to take into account this wonderful tactical resource.

29. B:c4 loses now after 29...ef. **29. fe** Q:e3 **30. Bf2** B:e6
31. Bb1 B:g7 . Ivanov was once again in his habitual time-
trouble. **32. Qc2** Qc4 **33. Bf4** b5 **34. Bd1** B:e5! **35. B:e5** B:e5 .



Diagram 197

If somehow we can manage to weigh each one of the last 15 moves in some imaginary way, each Black's move was heavier than its White counterpart. Korzubov has a definite positional advantage in the endgame now. **36. Qd4** f5
37. Bc1 Bf6 **38. Bc2** g5 **39. h3?**

White pawns on the king side are going to be valueless after this bad move. 39. Bf2 was to be preferred. **39... f4!** **40. Bf2** Qd6! **41. Bc2** Qf5! The material is equal now, but still the rook endgame is easily winning for Black.

42. Bd2. If **42. Qf3** Bd5 **43. Qd2**, Black plays **43... Qe3+** **44. Bc1** Qc4 . **42... Q:d4!** **43. cd** B:e3 **44. d5** Q:e7 **45. h4** h6 **46. d6** Q:d7 **47. h5** B:e6 **48. Bd5** B:e2+ **49. B:d3** B:g2 **50. B:b5** f3 . White resigned. A good example of an excellent endgame technique.

Holmov – Korzubov Tallin 1983

1. e4 e6 **2. d4** d5 **3. Qd2** c5 **4. ed** ed **5. Bb5+** Qd7 **6. B:e2+** Qe7 **7. dc** Qf6 **8. Qgf3** 0-0 **9. 0-0**. White is playing the opening rather timidly and is not trying to protect the "c5" pawn. **9... Q:c5** **10. Q:d7** Q:d7 **11. Qb3** B:e8 **12. B:d3**.



Diagram 198

Black managed to win a tempo in the opening, playing without the move $a7 - a6$. The retreat of the bishop to "b6", to a very active position looked tempting. It would have been very difficult for White to exchange the dark square bishops, since the "e3" square was controlled by $\text{B}e8$.

12... ♖b6?! This is an interesting decision. Korzubov is trying to seize the initiative immediately allowing the exchange of his bishop. **13. c3 ♜e4**. Black is consistent. **14. ♜:c5 ♜d:c5 15. ♖c2**. White couldn't capture the "d5" pawn because of $15... \text{B}ad8$ and $16... ♜:f2!$

15... ♖g6 16. ♜e3. R. Holmov defended against his opponent's attack calmly and obtained a minimal positional advantage, which by the way should not have bothered Black too much. **16... b6 17. ♖ad1 ♖ad8 18. ♜d4 ♖d7 19. ♖fe1**. $19. ♜e2?$ would have been a blunder because of $19... ♜g3$.

19... ♜d6 20. ♖e2 ♜c4 21. ♜c1. White avoids the exchange on "g6", to prevent Black to position the pawns on the squares "f6", "g6" and "g5".



Diagram 199

21... ♖:e2 22. ♖:e2 ♖e4 23. b3 ♜e5 24. f3 ♖:e2 25. ♜:e2.

White has a slight positional advantage in the endgame as before but he is far from converting it into a win. **25... ♜e6 26. ♖f2 f6 27. ♜f4 ♜:f4 28. ♜:f4 ♖f7 29. ♖d4 ♜c6 30. ♖d2 ♜e5 31. ♖e2 ♜e6**

32.♔d1. White brought the king to the queen side but this does not help him in any way to win the game.

32...g5! 33.♖g3 h5 34.h3 h4 35.♗h2 ♖g6 36.♔c2?! ♔f5
37.a4 ♗e7 38.♗d4 ♗c6.



Diagram 200

39.♗g4? White has no advantage anymore and trying to change somehow the course of the game Holmov sets himself on the road to danger. Well, he achieves what he is aiming at, the character of the play is soon going to change, but nevertheless now White has to put up a heroic effort to save

the game. The move 39.♗g4 reminds me of the old funny joke about some of the Latin-American dictators who tried everything to get rid of the deprivations of his people, and when there weren't any, he did everything possible to first create some.

39...♗e7 40.♔d1 ♔g6 41.f4. The only move to avoid the threat 41...f5. 41...♗e4! 42.b4 a6 43.♖g1 b5 44.ab ab 45.♔d2 ♔f5 46.♗e3 gf 47.♗f2. The game was adjourned here. Black has a definite positional advantage but strangely enough we failed to find a sure win, although we analysed the position thoroughly. White has a tiny but sure path to the draw, and by the way the analysis of both opponents coincided completely.

47...♗e5 48.♗:h4 ♗c4+ 49.♔d3 f3 50.♗h5+ ♔g6 51.♗:d5 ♗e2 52.gf ♗d2+. Black is going to a forced line with the hope that White will fail to find the best defence. It was possible to risk with 52...♗:f2, but the position after 53.♗:b5 looked to us very unclear. 53.♔e4 ♗:f2 54.♗:b5 ♗d6+ 55.♔e3 ♗:b5 56.♔:f2 ♗:c3.



Diagram 201

57. ♖e1! The only move leading to a draw. We saw all that in our analysis but we couldn't find any other way for Black with a real chance for a win.

**57... ♜b5 58. ♔d2 ♜d4
59. ♔d3 ♜:f3 60. b5 ♜e5+
61. ♔e4 ♜d7 62. ♔f4 f5 63. h4.**

Holmov was considered to be one of the best masters of defence in the world in his prime years quite deservedly though. White has overcome the difficulties already and the road to the draw is already easy. There followed:

**63... ♔f6 64. ♔e3 ♔e5 65. h5 f4+ 66. ♔f2 ♜f6 67. b6 ♜e4+
68. ♔g2 ♜d6 69. h6 ♔f6.** Draw.

Lets have a look now at the position arising after the exchange of the light square bishops:

**1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. ♜d2 c5 4. ed ed 5. ♜b5+ ♜d7 6. ♜:d7+
♜:d7 7. ♜gf3 ♜f6 8. 0-0 ♜e7 9. dc ♜:c5.**



Diagram 202

Nowadays grandmasters E. Bareev and E. Rozentalis are excellent specialists of playing this position for Black, but nevertheless we are going to continue to study Korzubov's games.

Ehvest – Korzubov

Tallin 1978

10. ♖b3. A. Sokolov played 10. ♖d4 against Korzubov in the same tournament. The game continued 10... 0-0 11. ♖f5 ♖e8 12. ♖:e7+ ♖:e7 13. ♖f3. Now Black made a mistake with 13... ♖ac8?. The game ended in a draw indeed, but White had a serious advantage. The right move was 13... ♖ad8 to fortify the “d5” pawn with the idea to put then the knight on “f6” to “e4”, and the knight on “c5” to head for “a4” or “e6” if necessary, with an approximately equal position.

10... 0-0?! Black has to be ready to defend a position with an isolated pawn having a dark square bishop against a knight. White can force the exchange of two pairs of light pieces with 11. ♖:c5 ♖:c5 12. ♖g5 and ♖:f6 next. The same situation arose in one of the games of the 1974 match Karpov – Kortchnoi, where Kortchnoi managed to hold, but still it was not easy and appealing for Black to voluntarily play a position without any real chances for a win, while the opponent had a long lasting initiative. In his game with D. Kayumov, Kiev 1983 Korzubov played 10... ♖ce4. The move 10... ♖a4?! was also tried in the game Motwani – Korzubov, Sas van Gent 1978. Motwani won the world championship of the “cadets” and he managed to find a convincing refutation of the wing manoeuvre of the black knight, being in excellent form then. After 11. ♖d4! ♖b6 (11... ♖d7? 12. ♖e5 ♖b5 13. ♖g4 0-0 14. ♖h6) 12. ♖g5 0-0 13. ♖fe1 ♖e8 14. ♖e2 the Scottish player offered a draw which was accepted, but objectively White had clear positional advantage.

Lets go back to the game Kayumov – Korzubov. In answer to 10... ♖ce4 White played 11. ♖fd4. In the majority of the contemporary games Black plays here 11... ♖d7 12. ♖f3 0-0 13. ♖f5 ♖d8 with an approximately equal position, but Korzubov played here 11... ♖d6. There followed: 12. ♖e1 0-0

13. ♖g5 ♖e8 14. c3 ♜fe4 15. ♗:e7 ♖:e7 16. f3 ♜f6 17. ♖c2 g6
 18. ♖f2 ♖:e1+ 19. ♖:e1 ♖b6 20. ♜c1 ♖e8 21. ♖:e8+ ♜:e8
 22. ♜d3 ♜c7 and soon the opponents agreed to a draw.

Lets continue our analysis of the game Ehlvest – Korzubov.
11. ♗e3. Ehlvest avoids the aforementioned exchange of the minor pieces. 11... ♜a4 12. ♖b1 ♖c7 13. ♜fd4 ♗d6 14. g3 ♖d7 15. ♖f3 ♗e5 16. ♖fd1 ♖fe8 17. c3. The White position is preferable. The Black knight on “a4” is misplaced.



Diagram 203

17...g6 In case of 17... ♜b6 Black has to reckon with the enemy knight assaults like 18. ♜c5 and 19. ♜f5. **18. ♜e2.** The knight manoeuvre to “b4” via the “c2” square deserved a serious attention. **18... ♜b6** **19. ♗:b6 ab** **20. a3.** The pawn structure of Black on the queen side lost its elasticity. White now

must organize a direct pressure on the “d5” isolated pawn. **20... ♖ad8** **21. ♜bd4 ♜e4.** Black has to look for an active counterplay. Korzubov intends to exploit the light squares with the idea to accomplish the knight manoeuvre ♜f6 – e4 – g5 preventing the opponent to bring a knight to “e3” i.e. the one from “d4” or the other one from “b4” via “c2”. **22. ♖d3 ♖h3** **23. ♜f3 ♗d6** **24. ♜ed4 ♖h5** **25. ♖g2 ♗c5** **26. ♖e1 g5!?** Black prepares to go to “g6” with the queen with an “h” pawn thrust next. **27. h3? ♖g6?** The law of consequent mistakes! Black could win with 27... ♖:h3+!, but Korzubov continued with his plan missing the lucky bird on his shoulder. Now, J. Ehlvest followed the advice of his great compatriot P. Keres who offered sometimes draws, after having blundered in his calculations of the variations, which he thought was a mark of unsatisfactory vigilance. Ehlvest in fact made real blunder on

the board and not in his calculations, so he decided to offer a draw which was accepted. The final position is rather complicated. In answer to 28.g4 Black can try to bring the knight to "f4" via e4 – c5- e6 – f4, and the bishop from "c5" should retreat to "f8" meanwhile, yet objectively White's chances are clearly better.

We are going to have a look now at another approach to this position when White refrains from the bishop check and plays 5.♘g3 instead after **1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2 c5 4.ed ed 5.♘g3**. Now Black has 5...♘c6, which leads after 6.♗b5 ♗d6 7. 0-0 to positions with a knight on "e7"; 5...♘f6 as well as **5...a6**. Black prevents cardinally the enemy bishop manoeuvre to "b5" intending to save a tempo with the bishop in case of 6.dc ♗:c5 and if 7.♘b3 the bishop has a choice to retreat either to "b6" or to "e7". Positions of this type with a bishop on "b6" are perfectly treated by the grandmasters A. Dreev and V. Eingom. Meanwhile the move 5...a6 is played with the idea to push forward the "c" pawn if White continues to develop his pieces.

6.♗e2 c4.



Diagram 204

This position is very interesting. White has already developed three pieces while Black has pushed only pawns up to now. Black has gained space and the pawns on "d5" and "c4" restrict the scope of the knight on "d2". If Black manages to compensate the lack of development, his space

advantage is bound to play a significant role in the course of the game. I am going to offer you some of my games.

Litvinov – Shereshevsky

Minsk 1981

7.b3 b5 The last move is possible now because of the "a6" pawn. **8.a4 ♖b7**. Naturally Black should not push the pawn to "c3" conceding the "d3" square to White. **9.0-0 ♗d6**. 9...c3? wouldn't work because of 10.♞e1 cd?? 11.♖b5 mate. **10.bc bc 11.♗a3?** This is a characteristic positional mistake. To classify the bishops as "bad" or "good" having in mind the pawn structure in the centre is definitely mistaken in this position. White leaves the opponent with a "bad" bishop on "b7" which however has excellent perspectives on the diagonal "h3 – c8", while the "good" bishop of White is severely restricted by the pawn chain d5 – c4 and its perspectives are very meagre. If White tries something more energetic like 11.♞e1 ♘e7 12.♗:c4 after the famous game Geller – Dreev, New York 1990 Black can defend tactically with 12...dc 13.♘:c4 ♖b4 14.c3 ♗d5!

The exchange of the dark square bishops is a consequence of a formal evaluation of the position. The same mistake was made by White in the game Kapengut – Shereshevsky, Minsk 1978 which went on in the following way: 4.ed ed 5.♘f3 a6 6.♗e2 c4 7. 0-0 ♗d6 8.♞e1 ♘e7 9.b3 b5 10.a4 ♖b7 11.c3 0-0 12.♗a3? ♘bc6 13.♗c5 ♖c7 14.b4 ♗:c5 15.bc b4 16.cb ♘:b4 17.♘b1 ♘ec6 18.♖d2 ♞ab8 19. ♘c3 ♗c8 20.♗f1 ♗e6 21.♘e5 ♘a5 22.♘b5 ab 23.♖:b4 ba 24.♖:a4 ♘b3 25.♞ad1 ♞a8 26.♖b4 ♖a5 27.♘c6 ♖:b4 28.♘:b4 ♞a4 29.♘c2 ♞a2 30.♘e3 ♞b8 and White managed to draw only because I failed to bring my advantage home.

11... ♘e7 12. ♖c1 ♘bc6 13. ♗:d6 ♖:d6 14. ♞e1 0-0. Black's position is already definitely better, because of the space advantage and the better piece position. **15.c3?!** White shouldn't voluntarily weaken the "b3" square, but he tried somehow to bring his "good" bishop into play. **15... ♗c8**

16. ♖d1 f6 17. ♗f1 ♖d7! Black is far from being interested in the exchange of the bishops after 17... ♗f5 18. ♖c2.

18. ♗e3 ♖ab8 19. ♖c2 ♗a5.



Diagram 205

20. ♗a3? It is not easy for White to find a sensible course of actions, yet he should have definitely avoided simplifying into an endgame. The possibilities for an active counterplay for White in the endgame are minimal while Black can improve his position at leisure. 20... ♗:a3 21. ♖:a3

♗f7 22. ♗d2 ♖b2 23. ♖c1 ♖fb8 24. ♗d1 ♖b2b6 25. ♗e3 ♖b2 26. ♗d1 ♖b2b7 27. ♗e3 g6 28. ♗f1 ♗e6 29. ♗e2 ♗d6 30. ♗d1 ♗f5!? Black improved his position and offered the exchange of the two pairs of minor pieces that protect the "b3" square and the "e" file. 31. ♗:d5? An act of desperation. The line 31. ♗:f5 ♗:f5 32. ♗:f5 gf does not bring White any particular joy, still it was the better chance.

31... ♗:d5 32. ♖e4+ ♗e6 33. ♖:b7 ♖:b7 34. ♗e4 ♖b2 35. ♖c2?. 35. ♗c5+ was more stubborn. 35.. ♖b1+ 36. ♖c1 ♖:c1+ 37. ♗:c1 ♗b3+ 38. ♗b2 ♖c6 The fight is practically over now. There still followed: 39. ♖:b3 cb 40. ♗c5+ ♗d6 41. g4 ♗h6 42. ♗:b3 ♗:g4 43. ♗b4. White resigned.

Dimitrov – Shereshevsky Primorsko 1988

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. ♗d2 c5 4. ed ed 5. ♗gf3 a6 6. ♖e2 c4 7. 0-0 ♖d6 8. b3 b5 9. ♖e1. The reader can get acquainted with the lines after the move 9.a4 in the chapter "Analysis of Actual Games" in the annotations to the game Geller – Shereshevsky. 9... ♗e7 10. a4 ♖b7 11. c3 0-0. It is time for making some opening observations now. Black has almost

finished the development having a definite space advantage. His perspectives are not worse to say the least. **12. ♖a3?** The already familiar mistake. **12... ♗:a3 13. ♖:a3 ♘d6 14. ♖a1 ♗d7!**



Diagram 206

16. a5 to be able to block the queen side lately with **b3 – b4** reducing Black's scope of action. **16... ab 17. b4 ♖:a1 18. ♗:a1 ♖a8.** Gradually White's position is deteriorating because of the mistake two moves ago. It is evident that you can find some improvements on the following moves of the Bulgarian player, but White's position is already difficult. **19. ♗b2 ♗b6 20. ♖a1 ♗a4!** Black should not exchange the rooks since it might be useful on the open "e" file. **21. ♗c1 ♗g6 22. g3 ♗d7 23. ♗f1 ♖e8 24. ♗d1 f5.** Black starts a king-side advance. **25. ♖a2 f4 26. ♖e2 ♖:e2 27. ♗:e2 ♗e7 28. ♗d1 ♗e4 29. ♗d2.**



Diagram 207

The Black knight on "d7" is better placed than on "c6". It has the options to manoeuvre to "e4" via "f6" or to "a4" via "b6". **15. ♗b1 ♗c6 16. ab?** White should have avoided opening a file on the queen side since now Black having the space advantage can play on both wings. It was better to play

29... ♗d3! Black occupied a lot of space on the whole board and starts the final assault to press his big positional advantage home. The game now follows an almost forced line.

30. ♗:d3 cd 31. ♗:a4 ba 32. ♗1d2 ♗e7! The right move. The exchange of the pawns on

the king-side would have been a mistake as you can see in the further course of the game. 32...a3?! 33.♖b3 ♗a4 wouldn't bring anything substantial for Black after 34.♖fd2. **33.♖b1.** If 33.♗f1 ♖f5 34.♖e5 Black obtained a decisive advantage with 34...♗b5 35.♗e1 a3 36.♖b3 ♖d6.

33...♖f5 34.♗f1 ♖d6 35.♖e5 ♗e8! 36.♖:d3 ♗g6! 37.♗e2 f3+! The "f" pawn played its decisive role. White resigned.

Closed Openings

The majority of my pupils stick to a white square strategy with Black in the closed opening systems they usually choose i.e. the Nimzovitch defence, the Bogoljubov defence if White plays 3.♖f3, or the more risky Ragozin defence. Naturally Black should be ready for the Catalan opening if White starts with 1.c4 or 1.♖f3 but still the Nimzovitch defence is the main weapon, the cornerstone of the opening strategy of the player for Black. I have treated thoroughly the problem of the formation of the opening repertoire by now and as you know already the purpose of this book is not to duplicate the already existing opening monographs. We are going to study some lines of the Nimzovitch defence in our treatment of the closed openings.

White has the choice of the line against the Nimzo, but still the further course of actions is determined by Black since this opening is so rich in possibilities for both sides that very often some of the lines can lead to a great number of different types of positions. The Nimzovitch defence passed successfully the test of time and White constantly failed to achieve any advantage playing slow unpretentious lines. The systems characterized by an early aggression are getting fashionable lately. A lot of new possibilities for White have been found in

the 4.♖c2 system, in the Leningrad variation with 4.♗g5, as well as in the lines 4.♗f3 c5 5.g3 or 4.f3. All these lines have been tested, checked and rechecked in the world championship match in 1986 and in the final challengers - match in 1990. Black has to solve new problems already but still he usually has the choice to enter an analytical dispute risking finding himself in an unfamiliar situation with a chance to seize the initiative. The other course of action is to avoid pinpoint theoretical discussions opting for some worse but reliable defence with an endgame tendency. We prefer the first approach but we strive for finding something new, still away from the main flow of the information avalanche to avoid being overly dependent on it. Lets start with the line **1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♗b4 4.♖c2**. It was not long ago that this line was considered to be harmless for Black since he had several reliable ways to fight for counterplay with 4...d5, 4...c5 as well as 4...0-0. White managed to find some improvements in all these lines which made Black's life far from easy. The time of the famous games of the type of Keres – Botvinnik, Leningrad 1941 in which after **4...d5 5.cd ed 6.♗g5 h6 7.♗h4 c5 8. 0-0-0? ♗:c3! 9.♖:c3 g5 10.♗g3 cd! 11.♖:d4 ♗c6 12.♖a4 ♗f5 13.e3 ♗c8 14.♗d3 ♖d7 15.♗b1 ♗:d3+ 16.♖:d3 ♖f5 17.e4 ♗:e4 18.♗a1 0-0 19.♗d1 b5 20.♖:b5 ♗d4 21.♖d3 ♗c2+ 22.♗b1 ♗b4** and White resigned, has long passed. Nowadays instead of castling long White plays 8.dc! and although the position is far from clear, White has scored some impressive wins in the games Glek – Yuferov, Moscow 1989 and Kasparov – Kortchnoi, Tilburg 1989. The problems facing Black became obvious.

The line 4.♖c2 c5 often transposes into the Queen's gambit – the system with early ♗f4, which is developing intensely lately with a lot of new ideas.

Therefore we made our choice upon the move **4...0-0**. White usually plays **5.a3** and after **5...♗:c3+ 6.♖:c3 b6** White

tended earlier to play this position in a peaceful manner. The play usually continued: 7. $\text{d}f3$ $\text{a}b7$ 8. $\text{e}3$ $\text{d}6$ 9. $\text{a}e2$ $\text{d}bd7$ 10. $0-0$ $\text{d}e4$ 11. $\text{c}c2$ $\text{f}5$ and Black had nothing to complain about. The second game of the semifinal match of the challengers Karpov – Yusupov, London 1989 is a nice illustration of the Black's counterchances in this line. Grandmaster A. Yusupov failed to win this game only due to his time-trouble by the way. You can find this game in the "Chess Informant" 48.

White usually prefers now another course of action starting with **7. $\text{a}g5$** . After **7... $\text{a}b7$** White plays the aggressive **8. $\text{f}3!?$** . The contemporary opening discussions now revolve around the line **8... $\text{h}6$ 9. $\text{a}h4$ $\text{d}5$** . We prefer another line for Black: **8... $\text{c}5$ 9. $\text{d}c$ $\text{b}c$ 10. $\text{e}3$ $\text{d}c6$** .



Diagram 208

White plays 11. $\text{d}h3$ in this position. The game Hass – Shereshevsky, Primorsko 1989 saw **11. $\text{a}d3$** here. There followed next **11... $\text{d}e4!?$ 12. $\text{c}g7+?!$** The Polish player was tempted to with a pawn here. In case of **12. $\text{a}d8$ $\text{d}c3$ 13. $\text{a}c7$ $\text{d}a4$ 14. $\text{b}3$ $\text{f}c8$ 15. $\text{a}d6$ $\text{d}b6$ 16. $\text{a}c5?$ $\text{d}a5$ 17. $\text{a}b6$ $\text{a}b$ and**

18... $\text{d}5$ It would be White who is going to have problems, but instead of **16. $\text{a}c5?$** , **16. $0-0-0$** is possible and the arising position would be similar to the one analysed further on. White was far from successful after winning the "g7" pawn. The game continued: **12... $\text{c}g7$ 13. $\text{a}d8$ $\text{e}a:d8$ 14. $\text{a}e4$ $\text{d}5$ 15. $\text{c}d$ $\text{e}d$ 16. $\text{a}c2$ $\text{f}fe8$ 17. $\text{c}f2$ $\text{d}4$ 18. $\text{e}4$ $\text{c}4$ and Black had more than sufficient compensation for the sacrificed pawn. After **19. $\text{d}h3$ $\text{d}a5$ 20. $\text{d}f4$ $\text{a}c6$ 21. $\text{g}4$ $\text{e}b8$ 22. $\text{f}fb1$ $\text{d}b3$ 23. $\text{a}b3$ $\text{e}b3$ 24. $\text{d}e2$ $\text{e}d8$ 25. $\text{d}c1$ $\text{e}b6$ 26. $\text{b}4$ $\text{a}a4$ 27. $\text{e}a2$ $\text{e}h6$ 28. $\text{c}e1$ $\text{c}3$ 29. $\text{d}d3$ $\text{c}2$ 30. $\text{e}c1$ $\text{e}h2$ 31. $\text{e}b2$ $\text{a}b5$** . Black won.**

Let us check whether Black can try the same idea in answer to **11. ♖h3**. To be able to do that Black has first to displace the bishop from "g5" with **11... h6** and to **12. ♗h4** (White can hardly rely on an advantage after **12. ♗:f6 ♜:f6 13. ♜:f6 gf**. The game Onishchuk – Alexandrov, Yurmala 1991 tested this evaluation and ended in a draw.) **12... ♗e4 13. ♗:d8** (Now to take the "g7" pawn is utterly senseless.) **13... ♗:c3 14. ♗c7 ♖fc8 15. ♗d6 ♗a4 16. b3 ♗b6 17. 0-0-0.**



Diagram 209

I spent some time back in 1989 analysing this position with grandmaster B. Gelfand. Black pieces are concentrated on the queen-side and if Black manages to prepare the move **d7 – d5**, or exchanges the enemy dark square bishop he will have a satisfactory game otherwise he might get

cramped.

Analysing with Gelfand I tried to fight the enemy dark square bishop with the help of the manoeuvre **f7 – f6** and **♗c6 – d8- f7**, but all this proved to be rather slow. I failed to find sufficient counterplay for Black. Lately I came to the conclusion that the fight against the dark square bishop on "d6" should be successfully done in another way i.e. using the "b7" square. This fine point involves some tactical play on Black's part. **17... ♗a5! 18. ♗b2 ♗c6!** The essence of Black's idea. Black is threatening **19... ♗:b3**. The same tactical stroke will follow even after **19. ♗:c5**. White should defend the rook on "d1" with **19. ♗f2**, but Black then has time to play **19... ♗b7**. Now if Black manages to exchange the bishop on "d6" and bring the king to "e7" he would be out of the woods. Besides he can try to seize the initiative playing **♖c8 – c7** or **♖cb8**,

♖c8, d5 etc. If White retreats the bishop to "g3" – **20. ♖g3**
 Black plays **20...d5** solving all his problems. I analysed this
 position with A. Alexandrov and I wanted to prove that Black
 can try to induce the a3 – a4 pawn move by White, by means
 of **20...a5?!** leaving 20...d5 for better times. Here are some of
 the lines we have been analysing: **21. e4 (21.a4?! d5!) 21...a4**
22. b4 cb 23. ab a3+ 24. ♖a1.



Diagram 210

24... ♖a4 (24...a2? 25.c5!)
25. ♖c1 ♖b3 26. c5 d6 27. c6
♖a4 28. ♖a6 ♖:c6 29. b5 ♖a5
30. ♖:c8 ♖b3+ 31. ♖a2 ♖:c1+
32. ♖:c1 ♖:b5 33. ♖b7 ♖a7
34. ♖c7 ♖c4+ 35. ♖a1 e5. After
 36... ♖a6 next Black has
 excellent chances for a win.

Besides this line we have an
 entirely different scheme in
 reserve. The game Kasparov – Hjartarson was played in 1988
 in Reykjavik. The opening stage of this game was played in
 the following way: **4. ♖c2 0-0 5. a3 ♖:c3+ 6. ♖:c3 b6 7. ♖g5**
♖b7 8. f3 d6 9. e4 c5 10. d5 ♖bd7 11. ♖h3 ed 12. cd.



Diagram 211

The grandmaster from
 Iceland played in this position
 12...a6?! and after 13. ♖d3 h6
 14. ♖f4 ♖e7 15. 0-0 the world-
 champion won convincingly.
 Annotating this game in the
 "Chess Informant" 46 G.
 Kasparov mentioned that in
 case of 12...h6 13. ♖f4 ♖e7 he
 would have castled long with

the idea of a later king-side advance g4 – g5. It came to my mind that Black should probably play in the diagrammed position the natural move **12...♖e8**. Black threatens to take the "d5" pawn and after 13.0-0 c4! promises some initiative. Black should hardly be afraid of moves like 13.♖c1, 13.♗c4 or 13.♗e2. In the first case 13...h6 is possible, in the second case 13...a6 is the answer, while in the third case 13...♖c8 14. 0-0 ♗a6!? should suffice. Evidently the Icelandic GM was afraid of **13.♗b5!**? and decided to prevent it with 12...a6. In fact White now threatens to take on "d7" or "f6" and after **13...♗:d5 – 14.♖b3 ♖c7 15.♗c4** seems to be very dangerous at first sight. Black has however a nice tactical solution: **15...♗e5! 16.♗:d5 c4 17.♖d1 ♗d3+ 18.♖f1 ♗:d5 19.ed.**



Diagram 212

Now Black can win opponent's queen at the expense of a rook and a piece. After 19...♖e1+ 20.♖:e1 ♗:e1 21.♖:e1 c3 the material advantage is on White's side but the position is unclear. Black can refrain from capturing the queen playing 21...♖c5 with a seemingly good compensation

for the sacrificed piece. This position requires however some additional analytical work.

White can play **14.♖d2** instead of 14.♖b3. Black is forced to retreat with the queen – **14...♖c8**. The play can continue with **15. 0-0-0 ♗c7 16.♗:d7 ♖:d7 17.♖:d6 ♖:d6 18.♖:d6 ♗e6 19.♖hd1 f6** with an approximately equal ending.

The next variation that we are going to deal with, treats the line starting with **4.♗g5**. The most logical move of Black is **4...h6**. White retreats **5.♗h4**. After 5...♗:f6 Black should better play **5...♗:c3+**, recommended by Alekhine in his

commentaries to some game, since White can play 6.♖c1 in answer to 5...♗:f6. 5...c5. This is the logical continuation. The white bishop has lost the control over the diagonal "c1 – h6" and Black starts his counter-play on this diagonal accordingly. 6.d5 b5!?. Now Black's play in the spirit of the Blumenfeld gambit is more than well grounded.



Diagram 213

White has the choice now between 7.de and 7.e4. We are going to start with the first possibility.

7.de fe 8.cb d5 9.e3 0-0 10.♘d3. The move 10.♘f3 vanished from the tournament practice after the famous game Spassky – Tal, Tallin 1973. I am going to include it here without

comments, since the reader can find it annotated in the book "In the Heat of Attack" about M. Tal's brilliant chess legacy. 10...♗a5 11.♙:f6 ♖:f6 12.♗d2?! a6! 13.ba ♘c6 14.♙e2 d4! 15.ed ♖:f3 16.♙:f3 cd 17. 0-0 dc 18.bc ♙:c3 19.♗:d6 ♖:a6 20.♙:c6 ♙b4! 21.♗b8 ♖:c6 22.♖ac1 ♙c5 23.♖c2 ♗a4 24.♗b3 ♗f4 25.♗g3 ♗f5 26.♖fc1 ♙b7 27.♗f3 ♗g5 28.♗b3 ♖c7 29.g3 ♙:f2+ 30.♙:f2 ♗f6+ 31.♙e1 ♗e5+ 32.♙f1 ♙a6+ 33.♙g1 ♗d4+ 34.♙g2 ♗e4+ 35.♙g1 ♙b7 36.h4 ♗h1+ 37.♙f2 ♖f7+ 38.♙e2 ♗e4+ White resigned.

So 10.♘d3 after all. I met this move first in my game against A. Yuneev at the Championship of the Armed Forces in 1981 in Odessa. I played 10...a6. The immediate 10...d4 deserved some merit as well. 11.ba?! White was afraid of the move 11...c4 regaining the sacrificed pawn but still 11.♘e2 was preferable.

11...d4! 12.ed cd 13.a3 dc! 14.ab cb 15.♖b1 ♙:a6 16.♙:a6 ♗:d1+ 17.♙:d1 ♘:a6.



Diagram 214

As a consequence of an almost forced mass annihilation the game turned into an endgame which is a bit unpleasant for White. In this position White played **18.♖:b2** and...a draw was agreed?! The point was that this game was played in the last round and the outcome of this game was immaterial to my tournament performance. The move 18.♖:b2 was imprecise by the way. White should have better played 18.♙:f6 gf 19.♖:b2. Black could in this case recapture his pawn with 19...♖fb8 with an eventual draw despite the slight edge, or play 19...♘c7!? 20.♖b1 ♘b5 keeping up the tension. Anyway, White had to fight for the draw in both cases. The game Yuneev – Shereshevsky found a reliable follower in my student – Oleg Romanov.

Mozhinsky – Romanov

Minsk 1988

18.♖:b2?! ♘d5 19.b5 ♘c5 20.♘e2 ♖a1+ 21.♘c1 ♘d3 22.♖c2 ♘5b4 23.♖c7 ♘a2 24.♙e7 ♖:f2 25.♙a3 ♘a:c1 26.♙:c1.



Diagram 215

Black showed an excellent attacking performance up to now and could easily finish off the game with 26...♖aa2! White has nothing better than 27.b6, but 27...♖fe2 comes next. Now White has the pathetic choice between losing immediately with 28.♖f1 ♖e1+! or losing a piece

after 28. ♖e3 ♜:e3 29. b7 ♜f2+ 30. ♗c1 ♜b3. Romanov played instead **26... ♜b1?** but nevertheless managed to win the technical endgame arising after **27. g3 ♜:b5 28. ♜c2 ♜d5 29. ♖e3 ♜e5+ 30. ♗c1 ♜f3 31. ♜e2 ♜c4 32. ♜he1 e5.**

We have to turn our attention now to another possibility i.e. **7.e4.** 7.e3 0-0 8. ♖f3 is hardly advisable for White because Black gets an active counterplay by means of 8...g5 9. ♖g3 (9.de d5!) 9...ed 10. ♖e5 ♜e4 11. cd f5. 12. ♖h5 doesn't work because of 12...♖e8. **7...ed!** This exchange is very important in this moment. The attempt to free himself from the unpleasant pin with 7...g5 8. ♖g3 ♜:e4 leads Black to complications which he should better avoid. **8.cd.** If 8.ed 0-0 9.cb ♜e8+ 10. ♖e2 g5 (10...♖b7) 11. ♖g3 ♜e4 Black has a rich counterplay. **8...g5 9.e5.** The idea behind the pawn exchange gets evident now. White doesn't have the manoeuvre 9. ♖g3 ♜:e4 10. ♖e5 because of 10...♖e7. White must sacrifice a pawn – **9...gh 10.ef ♖:f6 11. ♖:b5 ♖:c3+ 12.bc ♖:c3+ 13. ♗f1 0-0.**



Diagram 216

The seemingly insecure position of the black king is the first thing to notice in the diagrammed position. If we try to envisage the future development we can see that White will hardly be able to organize an attack while Black's position has a lot of merits to its credit: an extra pawn, a big if

not decisive advantage of the pawn structure on the queen-side and most of all the complete lack of coordination of the White pieces and particularly the impossibility of the rook on "h1" to successfully participate in the action due to the poor position of the king. After 14. ♜c1 Black should avoid returning with the queen to "f6", but he should play instead 14... ♖b2! in

complete harmony with the famous by now advices of Znosko – Borovskii. Now 15.♖:c5? d6 16.♖:c8 fails because of 16...♙:b5+, and in case of 15.♖b1 Black now retreats to “f6” i.e. 15...♙f6 gaining a tempo for the further development of the bishop to “f5”. I played this position with White way back in 1967 in some school competition against Sergey Makarytchev and since then I prefer to play it with Black.

I think we should better finish with the Leningrad variation for now and turn our attention to the main line starting with the move 4.e3. This is going to help us find the most important point of Black’s strategy in the Nimzovitch defence which is the cornerstone of our understanding of the closed openings.

Dydyshko – Korzubov

Minsk 1983

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♙c3 ♖b4 5.e3 c5 6.♙d3 ♘c6 7. 0-0 0-0 8.a3 ♙:c3 9.bc ♙c7. This looks like the famous, almost banal “tabia”. We prefer however to play immediately 9...♙c7 (instead of the usual 9...dc first) restricting the choice of the opponent.

10.cd ed 11.♘h4.



Diagram 217

White follows the theoretical recommendations but this modification of the Botvinnik system (with a knight on “h4” instead of on “e2”) seems to be rather artificial.

11... ♙a5!? This is the result of some teamwork opening preparation of the author and P. Korzubov. Black tries to dis coordinate the enemy pieces and entice them to unfavourable squares while defending the “c3” pawn.

12. ♖b2 (As for the move 12. ♖d2 – look at the next game.)
12...c4 13. ♖c2 ♖e8 14. ♗e1 ♘e7! The strategical fight is pro and con the White plan including the pawn advances f2 – f3 and e3 – e4. Korzubov intended to meet 15.f3 with a pawn attack at the enemy knight 15...g5. There could follow – 16. ♗g3 h6 17.f4 ♘h5 18. ♗f3 g4 19. ♗d1 f5.



Diagram 218

Black gained some space and disorganized the enemy central breakthrough but weakened his own king position and lost some piece coordination. White should have played this principled continuation though, with the idea to exploit Black's positional defects with 20.h3. I strongly

recommend the reader to analyse this position extensively.

V. Dydyshko decided to fulfil his plan with all the convenience and played **15.h3?** to control the "g4" square but missed an important counter-measure. **15... ♗c7!** Black now controls the "g3" square seizing the initiative permanently.

16. ♗b1 ♖d7 17. ♖e1 ♘e4! White lost the opening dispute. The only thing he was left with was to patiently observe how the opponent was gradually increasing the pressure.

18. ♖e2 a5! Excellently played. The rook from "a8" will join the king-side action along the 6th rank.

19. ♘f3 ♘g6 20. ♗h1 ♖a6 21. ♗g1 ♗c8 22. ♗h2 ♖f6. It looks like storm clouds are gathering over the head of the White monarch. **23. ♖:e4 de 24. ♘g1 ♘h4 25. ♖f1 ♖h6.**



Diagram 219

26.f4. Black's strategic initiative graduated into a direct king-side attack. White makes a desperate try to get out of the squeeze but suffers a tactical refutation.

26...ef 27.gf ♖g6! 28.♗g2 ♜:h3+! 29.♜:h3 ♞:b3 30.♞:h3 ♜f4+ 31.ef ♞:e2+ 32.♗g3 ♞:h3+ 33.♗:h3 ♞:b2 The

tactical phase of the game is over. The arising rook endgame, with an extra pawn for Black, is rather prosaic. Korzubov wins it easily:

34.♞e1 ♗f8 35.a4 ♞c2 36.♞e3 ♞a2 37.♗g4 ♞:a4 38.♗f5 ♞a2 39.♗e5 ♞g2 40.♗d5 a4 41.♗:c4 a3 White resigned. An excellent example of a creative endeavour by Korzubov!

A. Schneider – Shereshevsky Budapest 1991

The first eleven moves were repeated after the previous game, but now the Hungarian player tried **12.♜d2** instead of **12.♜b2**. There followed **12...♜e4 13.♜e1**. **13.♜:e4 de 14.c4** was not to be recommended after **14...♞d8**.



Diagram 220

13...c4 14.♜b1.

14...♞d8! Just like in the previous game, the retreat of the black queen is very effective. **15.g3**. **15.f3** wouldn't work after **15...♜:c3**, while **15.♞h5** would be met simply by **15...♞e8**. **15...♜h3 16.♜g2 f5**. Black has successfully

prevented the pawn advance e3 – e4 and starts to concentrate his forces in the centre.

17. ♖a2 ♘d7 18. f3 ♟f6 19. ♖af2 ♜fe8 20. ♗d2 ♞e7
21. ♜fe1 ♕:g2 22. ♚:g2 ♞ae8 23. ♗c2 ♟d8 24. ♜b1 g6.



Diagram 221

25. ♜fe2?! This move seems to be rather mechanical and allows the opponent to easily accomplish the right piece dislocation. 25. ♜b4 was a must to prevent the manoeuvre ♟d8 – f7- d6, although Black would have better chances anyway.

25... ♟f7 26. ♜b4 ♟d6. All black pieces are concentrated upon the "e4" square. Black in fact intends to occupy it after the pawn advance g6 – g5 – g4. Accordingly White plays 27. h4?, but this instead of being a remedy turns out to be a hara-kiri. 27... f4! Black exploits the newly created king-side weaknesses immediately and sacrificing a pawn develops a winning king-side attack.

28. gf ♟h5 29. e4. There was no other defence against the threat. 29... ♟:f4+. 29... de 30. ♗:e4. 30.fe was also bad for White due to 30... ♜g4+.



Diagram 222

30... ♜g7! The saying goes that the threat looks even more dangerous than its execution. Sometimes while attacking it is useful to make a pause when you don't possess any direct threats to let the opponent play something. Black took away his king from the eventual checks

along the diagonal "a2 – g8" keeping up all the advantages of his position putting up some additional sting to the threats ♖f6 or ♗f5. The game continued for only two more moves.

31. ♗f2? ♜h3! 32. ♜:d6 ♜h2+ White resigned because the mate after 33. ♗e3 ♜:e4+ 34. fe ♜g3# is unavoidable.

"One-Game Openings"

Every chess player knows that sometimes when you play a tournament there arises a situation when you are White in the next game and you have to play for a win, that win for you is a must but the opening repertoire of the opponent is worked out in some variation to a pinpoint precision. You get frightened that right after the opening the position might not be favourable for you or what is worse it might be so "wild" that you can hardly rely on a successful outcome. Some other situations are possible as well. For example, you are convinced that you are superior to your opponent in almost all components of our favourite complex game but you don't want to make the next round a futile competition of memory and knowledge about some sharp forced variation. You would like somehow to accentuate the focus of the fight on the other stages of the game and not necessarily on the opening. For emergency cases like that it might be very handy if you have an opening variation or a system fitting the task before you up your sleeve.

We are going now to have a close look at systems like that which we are going to call "one-game openings". Why "one-game"...? I would like to prevent you from thinking to set on the road that looks easy and alluring but is in fact a very hard one. You must have your own concepts and evaluations in all these lines, sometimes they might include a lot of forced

moves though, different from the established common knowledge theory. Otherwise this approach would not be helpful at all. The work you have to put in all this to be able to play these "one-game" systems is incomparably less than the one needed for your general opening preparation. Thus your results might improve substantially. The young player might be tempted sometimes by the relatively easy and quick success playing systems like this. The coach should be however more far-sighted. He should try to explain to his pupil that the opponents might get used to this opening approach, in case the young player sticks only to these systems setting aside the opening preparation on the basic repertoire. Besides, this includes the risk to sometimes go astray in the opening stage for long (remember the "Sveshnikov-case" we discussed some pages before). The work, the analyses you make on a variation like this will be very useful for the enlargement of your opening erudition and might be extremely useful for one or two games in a tournament where the outcome of them will be of paramount importance to you. Well, indeed you might not get an opening advantage every time you play an "one-game" opening but it certainly will develop a finer sense of opening feeling. The "one-game" openings can appear in multiple forms. Sometimes they can be systems that you play for the other side i.e. you might try to make good use of the extra tempo. In fact what you are striving for, by playing "one-game" openings, is the psychological effect. For example your opponent plays with White only 1.e4, while with Black in answer to 1.d4 he plays only the King's Indian defence. Now, you can start the game in the following way: **1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6 3.♗f4 ♗g7 4.e3 0-0 5.♗e2 d6 6.h3**. You are playing the Reti opening with colours reversed and an extra tempo. Your opponent is sure that he is playing the King's Indian defence. The play might continue like this: **6...♗bd7** (6...b6 would have been more flexible) **7. 0-**

0 ♖e8 Black is stubbornly trying to push the "e" pawn. 8.a4! e5 9.♗h2 ♖e7 10.a5! and Black is already under pressure.



Diagram 223

Black's queen-side is not developed at all in comparison with the Reti opening, in which White has by now managed to develop the bishop on "b2", besides White succeeded to save a tempo for the c2 – c3 move (c7 – c6 with Black) and can push forward the "c" pawn two squares forward

immediately followed by development of the knight to "c3" next. The chances of White in the diagrammed position are definitely preferable.

We are going to study now the opening **1.d4 ♗f6 2.♗g5**.

Sometime ago I spent a lot of my free time on writing the book "Endgame Strategy". Doing this I was working as a coach and I played sometimes in tournaments as well. I had practically no time left to study and analyse the current opening information nevertheless I was working hard on classics and I preferred to read the books treating the chess legacy of the old masters, instead of studying the current "Chess Informant". Therefore I made a decision to give up with White temporarily the move 2.c4 after 1.d4 ♗f6 and started playing only 2.♗f3 or 2.♗g5 relying much more on the middle game and the endgame. Little by little that led me to forming "my own" opening theory, while my practical results strangely enough improved. After all that, when my work on "Endgame strategy" was over, I fell back on 2.c4.

So **1.d4 ♗f6 2.♗g5**. Black is faced with a real strategical problem on move two already. White intends to capture on

"f6" and then, depending on which pawn Black captures with, to choose the further course of actions.

Black has at his disposal a lot of options to choose from, but he must decide first whether to allow the exchange on "f6" or not. If Black decides to prevent the exchange he can play 2...dxe4 or 2...e6, while if he is not afraid of the exchange – 2...d5 or 2...c5. Lets start with variations including White's chopping off the knight on "f6".

1.d4 dxf6 2.g5 c5?! I think that this move has much more drawbacks than merits. Thus Black must take on "f6" with the "g" pawn and I happen to be rather skeptical to a decision of this sort. 3.gxf6. The most logical continuation, although moves like 3.d5 or 3.dxc3 are also possible. I will offer the reader a really "wild" game of mine against V. Zhelyandinov:

Shereshevsky – Zhelyandinov Lvov 1977

1.d4 dxf6 2.g5 c5 3.d5 ♖b6 4.dxc3 ♜:b2 5.f2 ♜b6 6.e4 d6 7.f4 e6 8.gb1 ♜d8 9.f5+ f7 10.de fe 11.e5 de 12.fe d5 13.f3 f6 14.g4 d4 15.fxe2 d:d3+ 16.cd a6 17.♜:e6+ ♜e7 18.g3 d7 19. 0-0 ♜e6 20.g3 0-0-0 21.gbe1 f7 22.d4 ♜d7 23.g7 g8 24.♜:h7 g8 25.g7 g8 26.g4 b5 27.g3 c4 28.g2 f5+ 29.d4 ♜:d4+ 30.g1 g:h2+ 31.g:h2 g8+ 32.f3 and Black lost on time.

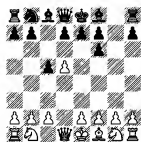


Diagram 224

3...gf. In case of 3...ef 4.dxc3 Black is going to have some problems with the "d" pawn.

4.d5!

White seems to be forced to keep the pawn structure in the centre on the dark squares, after the exchange of the dark square bishop, to be able to

restrict the enemy bishop. Here however, it is much more important to occupy space and to put in a wedge in the opponent's position to hamper the coordination between his pieces on both wings. **4...♟b6** This is how the game Shereshevsky – Kapengut, Minsk 1981 continued: **5.♟c1 ♞a6 6.e3 e6 7.c4!** The pawn on "d5" should be reliably protected. **7...♞g7 8.♞c3 f5 9.♞ge2.** The capture 3...gf took away the pawn protection of the "h5" square. The White knight intends to embed there. **9...h5 10.h4.** Naturally White does not intend to allow that pawn to move any further. Now, in place of a weak square, **Black has a weak pawn. 10...e5.** What Black has to do now to coordinate his pieces of the queen-side and the king-side? A. Kapengut is trying to vacate the sixth rank but as A. Nimzovitch mentioned good-humouredly – you can compare the weakness of the doubled pawns with the limping of a person sitting down. You can't tell he is a cripple, while he remains stationary. Whenever the pawns are pushed forward weaknesses become abundant. Now the "f5" pawn becomes very vulnerable.

11.♞g3 ♟g6.



Diagram 225

How should White continue now? **12.a3 d6 13.♟c2** looks very strong, followed by castling long. White can try further to induce the move **e5 – e4** and to use the "f4" outpost. White has something much more decisive however.

12.d6!! A really powerful blow. The "d6" pawn is cutting Black's position as if in two parts, which are impossible to connect once again until the pawn remains intact. Now the fight revolves around the "d6" pawn and a hard one at that.

12...e4 13.♖d2 ♘e5 14. 0-0-0 ♖h6 15.♟b5 ♖b8. Black intends to bring the knight to "c6" via "b4" and prepare the move a7 – a6. Therefore 16.a3! Now Black's knight is out of play. 16...b6 17.♟e2 ♘b7 18.♟f4 ♖g7 19.♖h3! White's king-rook enters the fight royally. 19...♟f8 20.♖g3 ♖h7 21.♖g5 ♖d8.



Diagram 226

Black has finally found a way to displace the enemy knight from "b5". He is ready now to retreat with the knight to the initial square to be able to play a7 – a6 next. White should play energetically, otherwise the realization of his advantage might get complicated. 22.f3! It is necessary to open the position. 22.♘e2 is weaker and too routine at that. 22...♟b8. The capture of the pawn 22...ef 23.gf ♘:f3 24.♘e2 is practically hopeless for Black. Kapengut playing his last move is trying to complicate the matters at all costs.

23.fe a6 24.♟c3 f6. Consequent enough. 24...♖:d6 wouldn't bring any success to Black after 25.♟cd5 with a crushing attack for White. 25.♖:f5! White plays in the Black's tune for now, willingly provoking further complications. I thought that the exchange-sacrifice was the most direct and quickest way to win the game and quite deservedly. 25...♘:e4 26.♖:e5 fe 27.♟h3 ♘g6 28.♟g5 ♖g7 29.♘d3. White has a great advantage of armour on the king-side and small wonder the attack is irresistible. 29...e4 30.♘:e4 ♘:e4 31.♟c:e4 ♖e5. This move enables White to make his child dreams come true. Black's position has long been lost anyway. 32.♖f2+ ♟g8 33.♖f7+ ♟h8 34.♖e7 ♟c6 35.♟f7+.



Diagram 227

In my happy old days when I was a child I knew only the basics of the chess science and I could have never thought that chess was going to become my life-long occupation, so I was getting much greater pleasure in the process of playing then. I remember that sometimes I managed to accomplish a

knight-fork simultaneously on the king and the queen, at other times being luckier the fork was even triple i.e. the king, the queen and some rook were attacked, but unfortunately I had never managed to capture everything. I had never succeeded however "to fork" at the same time all the four major pieces of the opponent. Now I was playing a tournament game with a strong master at that, and for the first and much rather a last time in my life, I managed to accomplish this. Well, now Black could resign immediately, but he dragged on with: **35...♗g7 36.♕:e5+ ♕:e7 37.de ♖e8 38.♗d6! ♖:e7 39.♗f5+**. This game surely must have been played in "the year of the horse"!

39...♗f6 40.♕:e7 ♗:e5 41.♖:d7 ♖f6 42.♖d2 ♗e4 43.♗d5 ♖f1+ 44.♗c2 and here Black finally resigned.

Lets turn our attention now to the most solid continuation – **2...d5 3.♗:f6 ef**. The game Shereshevsky – A. Donchenko, Lvov 1977 put to the test the other capture – **3...gf**.

After **4.g3 c5 5.e3 ♗b6 6.♗c3 e6 7.♖b1 ♗c6 8.♗f3 ♗d7 9.♗g2 cd 10.ed** Black played here **10...♗a6**. There arose now a peculiar psychological situation. In positions of this type, when the "h5" square has been weakened, the knight manoeuvre from "c3" to "f4" looks rather tempting. **11.a3** seems very natural followed by **12.♗e2, 13. 0-0, 14.♗f4** next. I tried to involve myself deeply in the strategical aspects of the

position and I understood that it would have been much more sensible for me to have developed my bishop on "h3" and not on "g2" on move nine, where the same bishop would have had a much larger scope of action. Accordingly I decided to play **11.♘f1**, waiting for some clarification of my opponent's intentions. A. Donchenko obviously considered the move **11.♘f1** to be a discreet draw-offer and overestimated his position, although White would have played **12.♙h3** in answer to **11...♗b6**. Another success for White out of all this was the fact that Black's clock added some twenty minutes or more to its time. The game continued:

11...♗a5 12.♙h3 b5 13.a3!? This was an interesting pawn sacrifice. Surely **13.♖a1** was simple enough, as well as **13. 0-0**, but the move in the game looked to me much more promising. **13...♙:a3 14.♗d3 ♕e7**. White would have an excellent positional compensation for the sacrificed pawn after **14...♙b4 15. 0-0 ♕:c3 16.bc.**

15. 0-0 b4 16.♗e2.



Diagram 228

Time to make some opening conclusions. White has finished his development and is ready to fight for the initiative in the centre and the king-side. Black's position has to its credit an extra pawn and the pair of bishops. The black king however is stuck in the middle of the board and will find no

safe haven on either wings and that is bound to bring Black a lot of troubles. It is not easy to evaluate this position precisely but in a practical game over the board is much easier to play with White and usually more rewarding.

16... ♖d8?!. Donchenko intends to bring the knight to "d6" but this manoeuvre seems to be too lavish in the aspect of time. Well, as I already mentioned, to play this position with Black is much harder than with White. 17. ♖fe1 ♖b7 18. ♗e3! White's queen is headed for the "h6" square adding to the pressure on the "e" file on the road. 18... h5?! 19. ♖f4 ♖d6 20. ♖d2! The squares for any type of aggression on the part of the black knight are well protected beforehand. The threat now is 21. ♖:d5 ♗:d5 22. ♗g2.

20... ♖c8 21. ♖a1. Only about five moves have passed and the position has turned from unclear into a winning one for White. 21... ♗b5 22. ♖:a7 f5. In case of 22... ♖:c2 the knight-sacrifice on "e6" would have been decisive.

23. ♗f1 ♗b8?! 24. ♖ea1 ♖b5 25. ♖7a5 ♗f8 26. ♖b3 ♗f6? Black has prepared an evacuation for his king to "g7" but he has weakened the "c5" square in the process. The final assault by White is picturesque:

27. ♖c5 ♗e8 28. ♗:b5 ♗:b5 29. ♖c:e6+! fe 30. ♗:e6 ♖h6 31. ♖:b5. Black resigned.

We are going now to look at the capture on "f6" with the other pawn 3... e4. Now this position can be treated in a more or less schematic way. White usually tries to develop his pieces in a way like: e2 – e3, ♗d3, ♖d2, ♖f3, or ♗f3, ♖e2 followed by c2 – c4. Black usually reacts with a pawn-arrangement on "c6" and "f5" and then bringing the knight ♖b8 – d7 – f6 – e4. In answer to the move c2 – c4 Black exchanges on "c4" and obtains a comfortable counterplay on the white squares "d5" and "e4" in the centre. I mentioned before that in the eighties I put away the "Chess Informants" and turned my attention to good old classics. I found a very amusing concept in A. Alekhine's comments to some game - I guess it was from the tournament book about Bled 1931, which I had borrowed for several days. I don't even remember the names of the players. In positions of this type the World

Champion No. 4 considered it a necessity to prepare the pawn advance c2 – c4 with b2 – b3 beforehand, to be able to take on "c4" with a pawn if Black exchanges on "c4", otherwise White can push the "c" pawn to "c5" and start the pawn advance on queen-side with b3 – b4, a2 – a4, b4 – b5. Now comes the question what would be the most rational piece allocation to realize the aforementioned plan?

It is not quite clear whether White needs his bishop on "d3" then. May be it is more sensible to develop it on "g2". If Black exchanges d5:c4 – b3:c4 the position of the white bishop on "g2" would be unconditionally favourable for White because the "b7" pawn will come under attack. On the other hand if Black refrains from taking on "c4", ♖g2 will have mainly defensive functions particularly if the "c" pawn goes to "c5". The position is of a closed type indeed, so the bishop will have plenty of time to be brought to the "f1 – a6" diagonal to prepare the pawn breakthrough b3 – b4 – b5 on the queen-side. To be able to find the optimal disposition of pieces, however I needed a lot of tournament practice which was exactly what I was short of.

Some positions after the pawn exchange dc – bc I managed to try in practice indeed, but positions in which Black avoided to exchange I had only to analyse. We are going to have a look now at some games after the exchange and after that some basic lines of my analyses the pawn exchange notwithstanding.

Shereshevsky – Ilinsky

Moscow 1979

***1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗g5 d5 3.♗:f6 ef 4.e3 ♗e7 5.g3 0-0 6.♗g2 c6
7.♗d2 ♗e6 8.♗e2 ♗d7 9. 0-0 ♞e8 10.b3 f5 11.c4 ♗f6 12.a3
dc?***



Diagram 229

Black's play in the opening stage of this game left a lot to be desired. The development of the bishop to "e7" was dubious, the early castling was without too much sense, but all this could be called a trifle. Black's last move however, the pawn exchange is a grave positional blunder which grants White an

almost decisive positional advantage.

13.bc ♖a5?! 14.♗c2 ♜ad8 15.♞fb1 ♜c8 16.c5! Black has nothing to put against the opponents pressure on the queen-side. The bishops are temporarily jobless and the "d5" outpost can serve only as a spiritual consolation.

16...♗c7 17.♞c4 g6 18.♗a4 a6 19.♞b2 ♞d5 20.♞ab1 ♜g5?! The White's pressure on the queen-side is getting unbearable but the text move connected with an exchange-sacrifice is not any remedy.

21.♜:d5 cd 22.♞d6 b5 23.♞:e8 ♞:e8 24.♗b3 ♜d7 25.a4 h5 26.ab ab 27.f4 ♜f6.



Diagram 230

White is an exchange up with a better position. The realization of the advantage does not require too hard an effort. The game continued:

28.♞f2 ♜c6 29.♞g1 g5 30.♞f3 gf 31.gf ♗e7 32.♗d3 ♞h8 33.♞e2 ♗d7 34.♞e5 ♜:e5 35.fe f6 36.ef ♞:e4 37.♞g1 ♗e6 38.♞g2! ♞:e3? 39.f7! ♞e1+ 40.♞:e1 ♗:e1+ 41.♗f1. Black resigned.

Shereshevsky – Litvinov
Minsk 1989

1.d4 f5 2.♠g5. The magic bishop move to "g5" is possible against the Dutch defence as well. Its tactical validity lies in the following line: 2...h6 3.♠h4 g5 4.♠g3 f4? 5.e3 e5 6.ef ef 7.♠:f4 gf 8.♣h5+ ♖e7 9.♣e5+. **2...♞f6?!** Now this move is a mistake. In comparison with the position where the other black pawn is on "f7" instead of "f6", Black is deprived from the knight manoeuvre ♞b8 – d7 – f6 – e4. The right answer to the bishop move is 2...d5. **3.♠:f6 ef 4.e3 c6 5.♞d2.** Black's last move seems to be a real provocation. White could push the "c" pawn now without any preparation, but after 5.c4 d5 it would have been premature to play 6.c5 because of 6...b6, while playing 6.b3 would lead to weaknesses on the queen-side and I decided to sidestep the studying of the consequences of this move for the time-being. White decided to keep up to the text of the song memorized before: **5...d5 6.g3 ♠d6 7.♠g2 ♠e6 8.♞e2 ♞d7 9.b3.**



Diagram 231

White was reluctant to castle king-side before his opponent, fearing some attack on the "h" line. Therefore I was following A. Alekhine's recommended plan leaving temporarily the king in the centre. **9...♞b6 10.♣c1 ♣e7 11.a3 ♖c8 12. 0-0** I decided now that my actions on the queen-side would be much

more effective than the eventual counter-measures of my opponent on the other side and it was time to castle.

12...g5 13.c4 ♠b8 14.a4 dc. After this exchange White adds to his positional pluses, but what could the good advice for Black be? After 14...h5 15.a5 ♞a8 16.cd cd 17.♣b2 White

was much ahead of his opponent in the development of his initiative. **15.bc ♖f7 16.c5 ♜d5 17.♗b2 h5 18.♠f1 ♠h7 19.♠a3 a5?** V. Litvinov intends to oppose the onslaught with a mechanical barrier, i.e. pawn on "a5" and knight on "b4", but his plan is blown by a tactical mine. It was worth to consider 19...h4 to get some practical counter-chances. **20.♜c4 ♜f4?!** Black relied on this having played his previous move. There was some merit in the desperation counter-attack starting with 20...f4!?, but to do this Black should have foreseen that 20...♜f4 turned his position hopeless. **21.ef ♔:c4.**



Diagram 232

22.d5! This positional pawn sacrifice enables White to suddenly include all his pieces in a king-side attack. Black's attention was turned almost entirely to the queen-side, and there he was more than successful, but the king-side has been left utterly defenseless. I

have to mention though that by playing 2.♔g2 White was constantly obliged to look up and find a lot of non-standard, creative decisions.

22...gf?! The sudden change of the character of the position affected Litvinov badly and he suffered from despair and time-trouble at the same time. He lost in fact in several moves only. Black would have hardly managed to save the game after 22...♔:d5 23.♔:d5 cd 24.♜d4, but this line would give Black more chances after all.

23.d6! Now the dark square bishop is out of play and the white rooks get an outpost on the "e7" square.

23...♔a7 24.♜:f4 ♜f8. 24...♔:c5 is also hopeless for Black after 25.♠e1+ and 26.♠e7.

25. Ee3 Ee8 26. E:e8+ E:e8 27. E:f6+ Eg8 28. E:f5 . Black resigned.

Shereshevsky – Barkovsky *Minsk 1981*

1. d4 f6 2. Ag5 d5 3. A:f6 ef 4. e3 Af5 5. Ad3 . Black developed his bishop a little bit too early, so White was delighted to deprive Black of his two bishops advantage immediately.

5... Ag6 6. De2 Ad6 7. 0-0 $\text{Dc6?!$



Diagram 233

convinced of this if you have studied well the game Shereshevsky – Beliavsky from the chapter about the Nimzovitch defence. If we make for example the following moves:



Diagram 234

Now White gets his chance to compromise the pawn structure of the opponent on the other side as well. **8. Ab5!** In positions in which the opponent has the two bishops advantage it is very important to exchange his knight, i.e. leave him with two bishops only, without any knights. You could have been

1. d4 f6 2. Ag5 d5 3. A:f6 ef 4. e3 c6 5. g3 f5 6. Ag2 Ad6 7. De2 0-0 8. 0-0 Dd7 9. Dd2 Df6 10. b3 De4 11. f3 we come to the diagrammed position.

Now, it would be a grave positional blunder for Black in the diagrammed position to exchange the knights with

11...♖:d2? 12.♖:d2. White will easily handle the opponents attack on the "e" file, protecting the "e3" pawn. It is quite enough for this to bring the king to "f2" and the rook to "e1" if necessary. White will be able to pinpoint the defects of the exchange of the knights with the move f3 – f4! at some moment and this will make the Black's pair of bishops useless. The drawback of the move f3 – f4 is the weakening of the "e4" square, but Black will be left with nothing to exploit it with. He doesn't have a knight, does he? White is going to continue his queen-side advance bringing the "c" pawn to "c5" and the rest is already familiar. As for the game we are dealing with:

8...0-0 9.♗:c6 bc 10.♖c3 ♖b8 11.b3 ♗c8 12.♖f4. Now White is firm in his intention to exchange one of the bishops.

12...♖d8 13.♖a4 ♗f5 14.♖:g6 hg 15.♗d3! ♗h5 16.f4!? This seems to go a little bit too far, but still it is the right way to defend from getting mated. White is weakening the "e3" pawn as well as the "e4" square, but the opponent has no knight to make any use out of it. Additionally White has some other possibilities of play connected with the manoeuvre ♖f1 – f3 – h3. On the other hand the natural move 16.g3 would enable Black to get an initiative on the king-side following the scheme: g6 – g5–g4, g7 – g6, ♗g7, ♖h8 etc. **16...♖e8** White will meet 16...g5 with 17.♗f5.

17.♖f3 ♖e7? Black fails to understand what the opponent is about and weakens the last rank hampering the scope of his own bishop at that.

18.♖h3. It was highly probable that the immediate 18.c4! was better to answer 18...dc 19.bc ♖b4 20.c5 ♖:a4 with 21.♗b3. Black would have to play 20...♖e8 21.cd ♖:a4, but after 22.dc White would have all the chances for a quick win.

18...♗g4 19.c4 dc 20.bc ♖b4 21.a3. Now already 21.c5 ♖e8 22.cd ♖:a4 23.dc doesn't look so convincing at least because of 23...♗d7.

21... ♖:a4 22. ♗b3 ♜:e3 23. ♗:e3. It was possible of course to play 23. ♜:e3 ♗:f4 (23... ♙:f4 24. ♜e8+ ♖h7 25. ♗:a4 ♙:h2+ 26. ♖:h2 ♗h4+ 27. ♖g1 ♗:d4+ 28. ♖f1 ♗f4+ 29. ♖e2 ♗g4+ 30. ♖d3 and White manages to avoid the perpetual) 24. ♜e8+ ♖h7 (24... ♙f8 25. ♜:f8+!) 25. ♗h3+ ♗h6 26. ♗:h6+ gh 27. c5 ♙f4 28. ♜d1 and White has all the chances to capture the "c7" pawn after the move g2 – g3. I decided to play for an attack.

23... ♖:c4 24. ♜b1 ♗e6. An only move. **25. ♗g3! g5** White threatened to mate after 26. ♜b8+ ♙f8 27. ♜h8+ ♖:h8 28. ♜:f8+ ♖h7 29. ♗h4#.

26. ♗d3! With another mating threat. **26... g6 27. ♜e3 ♗d5 28. ♜e8+ ♖g7 29. ♜bb8 gf?** Black was in a grave time trouble and failed to find the "only" defence. After the correct 29... ♜c1+ 30. ♖f2 ♗a2+ 31. ♗e2 ♗:e2+ 32. ♖:e2 f5 33. fg f6 White would have all his chances to win with an extra exchange, but still he would have a long way to go. Now all ends with a mate – **30. ♜g8+ ♖h6 31. ♜h8+ ♖g5 32. h4+ ♖g4 33. ♗h3#.**

Lets study now positions arising after Black avoids the exchange of the white bishop for the knight for "f6".

1. d4 ♖f6 2. ♙g5 ♖e4. This move leads to sharp and complicated positions.

3. ♙h4 g5. The most principled answer. Sometimes Black plays here 3...c5, 3...d5 and even 3...c6. After 3...c5 White should better play 4.f3. 4. ♖d2 is also possible as in the game from this book – Shereshevsky – Mordasov. The right answer to 4. ♖d2 is 4...d5! with a good game for Black. After 4.f3, in the game Shereshevsky – Gufeld, Daugavpils 1978, Black played 4... ♖f6! If we compare this position with that one after 1.d4 ♖f6 2. ♙g5 c5 White has now a bishop on "h4" and a pawn on "f3". Now the exchange 5. ♙:f6, contrary to 3. ♙:f6, is unfavourable for White since Black can answer 5...ef! with impunity, as for the other exchange 6.dc ♙:c5 now or afterwards, it is totally outside of the doctor's prescriptions,

because of the gaping holes along the diagonal "g1 – a7". In my game with E. Gufeld the position looked more or less like some strange Sicilian defence after 5.♖c3 cd 6.♙:d4 ♖c6 7.♙d2 e6. Unfortunately I am very far from being an expert in the Rauzer variation of the Sicilian defence and it will be difficult for me to make some precise analogy, but still I think that Black has nothing to complain about. The game ended with Gufeld's win by the way. Lately I came to the conclusion that White should try to make use of the two extra moves with a pawn sacrifice after 5.d5 ♙b6 6.e4 ♙:b2 (6...♖:d5? 7.♙:d5 ♙:b2 8.♙:c5 ♖c6 9.♙c3) 7.♖d2.



Diagram 235

White has in the diagrammed position a seemingly good compensation for the sacrificed pawn but still it needs a practical test. If White is not apt to play so sharply and sacrifice a pawn he can try the move 5.c3. The play might continue 5...♙b6 6.♙d2 d5 7.e3 ♖f5 8.g4 ♖g6 9.♖e2

with a rather interesting and complicated position. Well, such a method of development requires practice too.

Instead of 3...c5, another possibility is **3...d5 4.f3 ♖d6**. This was played in the games Shereshevsky – Kupreichik, Minsk 1979 and Shereshevsky – Tukmakov, Moscow 1981. In the first game after 5.♖c3 Black played imprecisely 5...c6 6.e4 ♙b6 7.♙b1 g6 8.♖f2 obtained a very bad position and lost. Tukmakov played much more energetically – 5...c5! 6.dc ♖f5 7.♖f2 d4! with more than sufficient compensation for the pawn. The game ended with a convincing win for Black. White's fifth move was unsatisfactory. Instead of 5.♖c3?! White should play 5.c3!. Now the move 5...c5 6.dc ♖f5 7.♖f2

is not strong at all, since White controls the "d4" square. On the other hand White has a lead in development with a good chances to seize the initiative.

Finally, the move 3...c6 is connected with a trap. Black intends with 4...♖a5+ and 5...♗h5 to compromise the pawn structure of the opponent. Now 4.c3 is the simplest solution although there might be some other moves too.

Lets go back to the move 3...g5. The game can proceed with: **4.f3 gh 5.fe c5 6.e3.**



Diagram 236

The diagrammed position is very peculiar with its non-standard pawn structure for both sides. There is no theory here like in the good old Ruy Lopez, or the Queen's Gambit. There is an old game Bondarevsky – Boleslavsky, Moscow 1945, which is included in all the theoretical books and it

is the reason that this position has been evaluated in favour of Black. After 6...♗h6 7.♗d3 ♘c6 8.♘d2 cd 9.ed ♖b6 10.♘b3 a5 11.a4 d5 12.♘f3 ♘b4 13.♗d1 0-0 14.♗d3 ♘:d3+ 15.♗:d3 ♗e6 16.♘:h4 ♗:e4+ 17.♗:e4 de with an advantage for Black. White's play however was far from perfect according to the contemporary standards. First of all the knight from "b1" should develop to "c3", after that the coordination between the rook on "a1" and the queen should not be impaired with the move 7.♗d3. In answer to the original Black strategy White should have treated this position with some creativity sacrificing the exchange with 12.ed ♘b4 13.♖b5+ ♗:b5 14.♗:b5+ ♘f8 15.c4! ♘c2+ 16.♗e2 (16.♘f2? ♗e3+!) 16...♘:a1 17.♘:a1.



Diagram 237

It is possible that Black would have excellent perspectives after this as well, but the struggle will be much more interesting in this case, while the move 12.♖f3? left White in shambles.

The diagrammed position after White's sixth move is very interesting. The powerful pawns in the white's centre are really impressive, particularly if White manages to keep them as they are and where they are. Black's doubled pawns on the side are an evident weakness which can be easily exploited in the endgame. I think that the main strategic aim for White should be to play for an endgame, but White should be ready in this position to enter complications at any moment. Now I am going to offer you some of my games in which I managed to reach an endgame.

Shereshevsky – Maryasin

Minsk 1978

6... ♗b6 7. ♖c3 cd In case of 7...e6 8. ♖f3 ♗:b2 White can try to grab the initiative with for example: 9. ♖b5 ♗b4+ 10. ♖f2! ♗a5 11. ♖e5 d6 12. ♖c4 and 13. dc.

8. ed ♖c6 9. ♖f3 ♖g7? Black refrained from taking the "b2" pawn for several moves in a row being afraid from the opponents initiative. B. Maryasin provoked an endgame with his last move which I willingly obliged. 9...e6 was preferable.

10. ♖d5 ♗a5+? 11. ♗d2! ♗:d2+ 12. ♖:d2 0-0 13. c3 e6 14. ♖e3.



Diagram 238

Black's two bishops do not compensate at all the weakness of the doubled "h" pawns. White has a powerful centre, excellent piece development – in fact a winning position! **14...♘f6 15.e5 ♘e7 16.d5! ed 17.♗:d5 d6 18.♙b5 ♘d8 19.ed.** The advantage in qualities transformed into an advantage

in quantity. White has an extra pawn and the further course of action is just to press this advantage home.

19...h3 20.gh! This is typical for positions like this. You should better avoid leaving an enemy pawn too advanced in your position.

20...♙e6. The capture **20...♙:h3** wouldn't matter much for the outcome of the game.

21.♗f4 ♙b6 22.♗:e6 fe 23.♙:c6 bc 24.♙e2 ♖ad8 25.♖ad1. The position has been clarified more or less. The rest is just a matter of a simple technique.

25...e5 26.♖hf1 ♖f6 27.d7 ♖f7 28.♗g5 ♖f:d7 29.♖:d7 ♖:d7. Black managed even to capture the enemy best pawn, but still his four pawn "cripples" leave him with no practical chances to save the game. Black's position is "totally" lost.

30.♖f6! It is very useful for White to control the sixth rank to be able to force the enemy bishop to go to "d8" in order to have ♗g5 – e6 as a tempo move.

30...♖g7 31.h4 ♖g6. The ending with minor pieces is as hopeless for Black as the rook ending.

32.♖:g6+ hg 33.♙f3 ♙g7 34.♙g4 ♙e3 35.♗e4 ♙h6 36.b3 ♙b6 37.c4 ♙d4 38.♗g5 a6 39.♗e4 ♙g1 40.h3 ♙d4 41.♗g3 ♙f2 42.♗e4. The game was adjourned now but Black resigned without resuming play. White wins easily pushing the

"h" pawn to "h5" gaining the outpost on "f5" for the king and then wins the "e5" pawn.

Shereshevsky – Yuferov
Minsk 1985

6...♗h6 7.♘f2 This is better than 7.♘d3. 7...♘c6. There are some other moves in this position like 7...e6 and 7...cd, but they usually lead by transposition to one and the same position. The move 7...♗b6 is not precise at all, since White plays 8.♘c3 threatening 9.♘a4, while 8...cd presents White with an additional choice – 9.♗:d4. Lets investigate the consequences of the moves 7...e6 and 7...cd. Black starts to put a piece pressure on the enemy centre playing 7...cd, threatening to take the "b2" pawn. White plays however 8.ed ♘c6 9.♘f3 ♗b6 10.♘c3 ♗:b2 11.♘b5 ♘d8 12.♗b1 ♗:a2 13.d5! and Black's queen will be trapped. For example: 13...♘b8 14.♗d4 ♗:c2+ 15.♗e2 ♗g8 16.♗b2. After 7...e6 8.♘c3 ♘c6 9.♘f3 cd 10.ed ♗b6 Black is doing something much more sensible. In fact the same position can arise in the previous variation if Black plays 10...e6 instead of 10...♗:b2?.



Diagram 239

The move 11.♘b5 deserves a serious attention in the diagrammed position because White would like to capture the enemy knight at some moment to be able to lessen the pressure on the central "d4" pawn. White has an even more enterprising but risky manoeuvre i.e. 11.♘b5!? The

Canadian players in ice-hockey used to slide the puck in the enemy half and then all the players rushed skating after it to press the opponents in their zone. Here this analogy with ice-

hockey seems to be rather well-grounded. White intends to place the knight deep into the enemy position and support it with pawns. Black's defence is very difficult. For example if 11...♖e7 then 12.c4! and if 12...d6 13.b4 and White will have the matters to his choice.

Lets go back to the game Shereshevsky – Yuferov. White answered 7...♖c6 with 8.d5. Sometimes earlier I played with the same opponent in 1979 and I tried 8.c3. (8.♖c3?? would be a blunder because of 8...♗:e3+). The game continued: 8...♗b6 9.♗b3 cd 10.cd (10.ed? ♗c1!) 10...♗:b3 11.ab e5 12.♖f3 d6 13.d5 ♖b4 14.♗b5+ ♖d8 15.♗c1 ♗d7 16.♗f1 h3 17.gh ♗:h3 18.♗c4 ♗:f1 19.♗:b4 ♗a6 20.♖h4 ♗g8 21.♖f5 ♗f8 22.♖c3 and White got a big probably decisive positional advantage.

Evidently S. Yuferov found an improvement somewhere, so I decided to deviate first, moreover I thought that the position from the game in 1979 was rather unclear. This is enough to explain the move 8.d5. I decided to analyse this position seriously after the game and to try to find the best move for White. It didn't take me long to find 8.♗h5! Black has nothing better now than 8...♗b6 but White plays 9.♗:c5! with a clear endgame advantage after 9...♗:c5 10.dc, as well as after 9...♗:b2 10.♗c3. The opening dispute seems to be solved, but the reader might like to follow the struggle in our endgame.



Diagram 240

So 8.d5 ♖e5 9.♗h5 d6 10.♗b5+! ♗d7 11.♖f3! ♗g7 12.a4.

White played energetically and managed to exploit the defects of the Black's strategy and seized the initiative. Black's two bishop advantage doesn't matter much, his doubled

pawns are subjected to an attack and the white queen is excellently posted on the weak "h5" square. Yuferov could snatch a pawn with 12...♖:f3 13.gf ♗:b2 14.♖a2 ♗f6, but after 15.f4 the advantage of White is huge. Black preferred to play an endgame, but now White has an extra pawn. The fate of the game is decided already – 12...0-0 13.♗:d7 ♖:d7 14.♖:h4 ♖g4 15.♖:g4 ♖:g4+ 16.♗f3 ♖e5+ 17.♗e2 ♖g6 18.♖:g6 hg 19.♖d2 b6 20.c3 a6.



Diagram 241

White has an extra pawn and now is the time to decide the plan for its realization. It would be very naive now to immediately start a pawn advance on the king-side in order to create a passed pawn. Black will be able to get a lot of counterplay on the other side of the board. White should better

clarify the situation on the queen-side first trying to create some weaknesses there and after that start a combined play on both wings.

21.♖a3! Thus White liquidates the threat b6 – b5 preparing b2 – b4. **21...♖ab8 22.♗d3 ♗f6 23.h3.** White should not be in a hurry at all. There is no need to let Black's rook to seize the "h" file with a tempo. Besides, in positions like this, it can be useful sometimes to let the opponent have some opportunities to show an activity. **23...♗g7 24.♖b1 ♖fc8 25.♖f3.** I continued with the same policy, but it wouldn't be easy for me now to realize why I refrained from the move 25.b4. **25...♖c7 26.b4 c4+** Now White has an excellent outpost on "d4", but evidently the opening up of the position would have been even more disastrous for Black. **27.♗c2 ♖h8 28.♖aa1 ♖cc8 29.b5 a5.** White should prepare now the

manoeuvre ♖f3 – d4 – c6. White should be careful however, since Black can obtain some counterplay with – ♖h4. Besides White should try to avoid, after the exchange ♖d4 – ♗:d4 – cd, the eventual possibilities for Black's activity on the queen-side in the rook ending. White should try to paralyze the opponent's actions setting up a pressure on the "f" file. **30. ♖f1 ♖h5 31. ♖ad1 ♖d8?! 32. ♖d2 ♗e5.** Black is trying to do something against the pressure of White on the "f" file, but allows White an excellent opportunity to play – **33. ♖d4!** Just on time. Black can not push the "f" pawn. **33... ♖h4 34. ♖df2 ♗f6 35. ♖c6 ♖f8 36. ♖f4.** This wraps it up. The knight managed to occupy the "c6" square and the "c4" pawn became vulnerable now. There followed: **36... ♗g5 37. ♖:h4 ♗:h4 38. e5 ♖e8 39. ♖f4 ♗g5 40. ♖e4 f5 41. ef+ ♗:f6 42. ♖d2 e6 43. h4 ♗h6 44. g4 g5 45. h5 e5 46. ♖:c4 e4 47. ♖d4** Black resigned.

We have to analyse now some moves that lead to transpositions in the opening, connected with some original lines. For example Black can play 6... ♖c6, so that after 7. ♖c3 ♗h6 White doesn't have 8. ♖f2 because of 8... ♗:e3+. White can play now 8. d5! ♖b8 9. e5 ♗:e3 10. ♗c4 with a crushing initiative for the pawn. Sometimes Black plays 6... cd 7. ed e5. Now 8. ♗c4!? seems to me to give White excellent attacking chances, but the position requires a thorough analysis.

I am not trying at all to prove that White gets an advantage playing 2. ♗g5 on move two. Had it been so, the bishop move would have been played every second game in the World Championship matches. But the reader should be convinced by now, after having played over the previous games, that one imprecise move can often lead Black to insurmountable troubles, besides White should not try to complicate too much and can safely play for a comfortable endgame advantage. I would like the reader to try to form his own theory, different

from the established book theory in this variation, which of course will be the subject of further clarifications.

We are going to study now the move **2... e6**. White should play **3.e4** otherwise the bishop move becomes senseless. **3...h6**. Sometime ago I analysed the move **3...c5** and failed to find anything convincing for White after **4.e5 h6**. I decided to play like this with Black against grandmaster S. Lputian at the Championship of the Armed Forces in 1984.

Lputian – Shereshevsky
Minsk 1984

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♁g5 e6 3.e4 c5 4.d5! h6 5.♁:f6 ♖:f6 6.♔c3 a6 7.♔f3 e5?! 8.a4 b6 9.♁d3 d6 10.♔d2. White obtained a clear positional advantage playing "simple chess". Black's position is very difficult already, nearly lost. White has a clear way to develop a strong initiative on the queen-side, while Black's counterplay on the king-side is far too slow. **10...g6 11.0-0 ♁g7 12.♔c4 ♔d7**.



Diagram 242

13.♖b1! White opens files on the queen-side. The original queen move is much stronger than the routine **14.♖b1**. If Black decides to exchange pawns the white queen will have an excellent attacking outpost on "b4". **13... 0-0 14.b4 ♖b8 15.♖b2 ♖e8**. Black does not even think about anything

active. His main task is to defend his position on the queen-side. The rook move enables the black bishop to have the "f8" square. **16.♖ab1 ♁f8 17.bc bc 18.♖a3 ♖:b1 19.♖:b1 ♖g5 20.a5**. Lputian is methodically increasing the pressure on the queen-side not paying any attention to opponent's

counterplay. **20...♟f6**. Well, I wanted very much to play **20...f5**, but I understood that this pseudo-activity is going to probably lead me to disaster after **21.♞a4**. **21.♞c1 ♞h4** **22.♞e3 ♟h5** **23.♞b8**. White manoeuvred the queen in the centre to be able to control the situation on the king-side and to continue to play actively on the queen-side. **23...♞d8**. Well, it is sad to have to make such a move but I couldn't find anything better. **24.♟b6 ♞c7** **25.♞a8 ♞d8!**? This is an introduction to a hidden counterplay.



Diagram 243

26.♟c8?! Black is utterly helpless and White can improve his position as he pleases. **26.g3** looks very impressive. Instead of this Lputian, being in a time-trouble decided to force the issue – **26...♞b7!**. White failed to anticipate this. **27.♞:a6 ♞b4** **28.♟:d6 ♞:d6** **29.♞:d6 ♟:d6**. Black's queen ran away

from the trap at the expense of only a pawn. White now is in lack of an exit square for the king. If he had played somewhere before a move like **g2 – g3**, he could have played now **30.♟b5 c4** **31.♟:c4 ♞:c4** **32.♟:d6**, but all this was impossible because of **32...♞b4**. The black position remained very bad, but still I began to see the light of hope for a more favourable outcome.

30.♟f1 ♞:a5 **31.♟b5 ♟f8** **32.h3 ♟f6** **33.f4?** I didn't know why White was so much in a hurry. The "f" pawn push had to be prepared with **g2 – g3** first, while now **33.♟a3** was very sensible to bring the knight to "c4", taking advantage of the fact **33...♟:e4** was impossible because of **34.♟c4**. **33...♞a1** **34.d6?!** **♟d7** White's play in the time-trouble is really not easy to comment on. **35.f5 a5** **36.h4 ah** **37.♞f2 ♞d1** **38.♞:h4**

♠:d6 39.♙:h6 ♜e7 40.c4 ♝g4. We are witnessing a miracle. Black couldn't even dream about a position like this fifteen moves ago. White can not win anymore. Moreover he must be careful not to lose the game if he fails to oppose Black's counterplay on the dark squares. The game ended after six moves:

41.♙e3 ♜g5 42.♙d3 ♜f6 43.♜c3 ♜f4 44.♙f2 ♝g5 45.♙e1 ♜g7 46.♙d1 ♜e3 and we agreed to a draw. This game is an excellent illustration of the drawbacks of the Black's set-up, beginning with the move 3...c5. Usually Black plays on move three – **3...h6 4.♠:f6 ♙:f6.** Now we have to refer to the classics once again. I found an interesting concept in A. Alekhine's annotations to some game.



Diagram 244

The position was somehow similar to this one. White has a powerful pawn centre, but Black has the two bishops advantage and a sound and dynamic pawn structure. It is not easy for White to develop any initiative. Alekhine recommends – to retreat with the knight to “e1”, push the “f” pawn two squares

forward and then go back with the knight to “f3” after which the attacking potential of White will increase considerably. You not only have to study the games that belong to classics, but you should try to creatively implement the ideas behind them in the contemporary chess. White should spent three tempi to build this set-up, while in the line we are working on White can try to push the “f” pawn first and then bring the knight to “f3”. I haven't played yet any games on this theme, but if White plays **5.♜c3 d6 6.♙d2!** followed by f2 – f4 and ♜f3, the White's perspectives look very optimistic. I managed to play a lot of games like this with

White in the Pirc – Ufimcev defence affected by Alekhin's ideas. Here are some examples:

Shereshevsky – Malysov
Minsk 1985

1.e4. I play this move very seldom, but since B. Malysov in answer to 1.e4 sticks solely to the Ufimcev defence, I didn't see any reason to give him an additional choice playing 1.d4. **1...d6 2.d4 ♘f6 3.♗c3 g6 4.♕g5 c6 5.♖e2?! This move is rather extravagant, while 5.♖d2 – the normal move is both more natural and stronger too. 5...♗g7 6.f4 h6?! 7.♕:f6!? ♕:f6?.** Now everything goes according to A. Alekhin's scheme and easy at that. It would have been better to play 7...ef!?. White should not allow Black to play f6 – f5, therefore he should play 8.f5! himself and after 8... 0-0 choose between 9.♖f3 and 9.g4 with a rather complicated position.

8.♗f3 ♕g4?! There was absolute no need to play this. Black evidently does not intend to exchange on "f3", so why does he provoke the move h2 – h3? **9.0-0-0 0-0.** White was thinking already whether to play 10.e5. **10.h3 ♕e6.** I don't intend to criticize Black's moves one by one, since Black's strategy as a whole is dubious. **11.g4.**



Diagram 245

You don't need to be a chess expert to be able to understand that White's attack is much quicker than Black's counterplay.

11...♖a5 12.a3 b5 13.f5! ♕c4 14.♖e3 ♕g7 15.g5! h5 16.♗h4. White is about to begin a crushing king-side attack, while Black is too far from the

start of any active actions yet. The rest is spectacular:

16... ♖d7 17. fg fg 18. ♗:g6 ♜e8 19. e5! de 20. de ♜c7 21. ♗:c4+ bc 22. ♜he1 ♜ab8 23. ♜e4 ♖b6 24. ♗f4 ♖d5 25. ♗e6! ♜b6 26. ♜:d5 ♜:b2+ 27. ♗d2 ♜b3 28. ♖d1 Black resigned.

Shereshevsky – Azmaiparashvily

Volgograd 1985

1. d4 d6 2. e4 g6 3. ♖c3 ♗g7 4. ♗g5. In positions in which Black's knight is on "g8", the bishop move is not so effective but is still possible. It was tempting to put to the test this aggressive scheme with Z. Azmaiparashvily – "himself", who had been playing the Ufimcev defence all his life and had managed recently to beat with Black the world champion A. Karpov in a spectacular game.

4...c6 5. ♜d2 ♜a5 6. f4 h6. Black is playing the opening very precisely. The move of the "h" pawn should precede the development of the knight to "f6".

7. ♗h4 ♗f6 8. ♗f3 ♗g4 9. ♗e2. In the game Dreev – Azmaiparashvily, Moscow 1988 White allowed Black to double the pawns on the "f" file and won a beautiful game subsequently.

9...b5 10. ♗:f6! 10. e5 would be followed by 10...b4 Therefore White exchanges the bishop for the knight to avoid the threat on the "e4" pawn.

10... ♗:f6 11. 0-0 ♜b6 12. ♜ad1 ♗g7 The move 12...e5 would have been a mistake after 13. fe de 14. ♗:e5! ♗:e2 15. ♜:f6 (15. ♜:e2 ♗:e5 16. ♜f2 is also good)

13. ♗h1 ♖d7 14. h3 ♗:f3 15. ♗:f3 0-0 16. e5 ♜ad8.



Diagram 246

White's position is clearly better with the space advantage and the attacking chances on the king-side. Had Black played 16...b4 on the previous move he would have had still a lot a problems after 17.♖a4! ♕b5 18.b3. Azmaiparashvily offered me a draw in this moment which I accepted after some hesitation

having in mind that it was a team-competition and besides, our team was doing well on the other boards. White had a very strong move 17.e6! compromising the pawn structure of the opponent on the king-side with the idea to meet 17...de with 18.♗g4.

Shereshevsky – Peev

Primorsko 1989

1.d4 g6 2.e4 ♗g7 3.♖c3 d6 4.♗g5 c6 5.♙d2 b5 6.f4 ♘d7 7.♘f3 ♘b6 8.a4. White has several active schemes at his disposal. I decided first to clarify the situation on the queen-side.

8...b4 9.♘d1 a5 10.♘e3 ♘f6.



Diagram 247

11.♗:f6!? White loses no time to defend the "e4" pawn and parts with the dark square bishop without giving it a second thought.

11...♗:f6 12.♗d3 ♗g7 13.c4!? White's centre is really beautiful, but it is not easy at all to find something decisive.

Black has a very flexible pawn structure, the two bishops advantage and the option to castle either side. Had the king been on "g8", White could have tried some direct "violence" with h2 – h4 and if h7 – h5 – then f4 – f5, but with the king still on "e8" in the centre, such an approach would be rather rough. The move in the game aims at the enlargement of the space advantage and the restriction of the actions of the opponent on the queen-side.

13...c5. Black tries to clarify the pawn structure. **14.dc dc 15.e5 ♖b7 16. 0-0 0-0 17.♖c2 ♖c7 18.b3!** White prepares the exchange of the light-squared bishops, which would fail if done immediately with 18.♗e4 b3!

18...f5?! P. Peev is trying to prevent the fulfillment of the opponent's plan, but his actions are overly straightforward. Indeed, Black's position is worse, but the text move induces complications that are favourable for White.



Diagram 248

19.♗:f5! This piece sacrifice is easy to find and it leads to a quick demolition of the pawn shield of the enemy king.

19...gf 20.♗:f5 ♖:f5! The best practical chance.

21.♖:f5 ♖f8 22.♖e6+ ♖h8 23.♗g5 h6! The endgame after **23...♖c6? 24.♖:c6 ♗:c6 25.♗e6** leaves Black without

any chance.

24.♗f7+ ♖h7 25.♖f5+! ♖g8 26.e6 ♖c6! 27.♖g6 ♖e4 28.f5 ♖d4+ 29.♖h1 ♖f6 30.♗:h6+ ♖g8 31.♗f7+ ♖g8 32.♖ae1. The exchange on "f6" here is not so clear since the pawn structure has been changed and Black's bishops have become active again.

32...♖c8 33.♗h6+ ♜h8 34.♗f7+ ♜g8 35.♖f4 ♖:f7! The Bulgarian player is defending heroically creating maximum difficulties for the opponent to realize his advantage. 36.♗f7 ♜f7 37.♜g4! It is not the time now for White to go into an endgame.

37...♗d6 38.h4 ♜h8 39.♖e6 ♗f6 40.h5 ♜g7? Peev made a decisive mistake on the last move of the time-control. After 40...♗c8 there was a lot of fight left.



Diagram 249

41.♜:g7! White can sacrifice the exchange in this position forcing an easy win in the endgame. 41...♜:g7 42.♖g4+ ♜h7. 42...♜f7 wouldn't do after 43.♖:f6+ and 44.h6. 43.♖:d6! ed 44.♖g6 ♗e5 45.f6 ♗e4 46.f7 ♗g7 47.♖:d6 ♗f8. 47...♗c2 was not enough to save the game because of the line: 48.♖d8 ♗:b3 49.f8♜ ♗:f8 50.♖:f8 ♗:c4 (a4) 51.♖c8 (a8) b3 52.♖:c5 b2 53.♖c7+ and 54.♖b7.

48.♖a6 ♜g7. 48...♗c2 wouldn't help here either after 49.♖:a5 ♗:b3 50.♖a8 ♜g7 51.h6+.

49.♖:a5 ♜:f7 50.♖a7+ ♜f6 51.a5 ♜g5 52.♖f7! ♗h6 53.♖e7. Black resigned.

Shereshevsky – Danailov Primorsko 1990

1.d4 d6 2.e4 ♗f6 3.♖c3 g6 4.♗g5 c6 5.♜d2 ♜a5?! 6.f4 ♗g7 7.♗f3 ♗g4 8.♗e2. I think that White has a better position. It is not quite clear what kind of role the black queen on "a5" is performing. White needs only to castle, finishing off the development with a strong attacking position. Black needs to be on a constant watch for the central pawn breakthrough e4 – e5. 8...♗bd7 9.e5!? de. 9...♗d5 was not good because

of 10.♖:d5 ♖:d2+ (10...♖:d5 11.c4) 11.♖:d2! and the black bishop on "g4" is hanging and 11...♗:e2 will be met by 12.♖c7+.

10.fe ♖h5.



Diagram 250

Black's knight is a poor sight at the edge of the board. It is not hard to presume that S. Danailov is going to try to free it with f7 – f6 sometimes soon. Therefore White makes a prophylactic move with the bishop – **11.♗h4!** threatening 12.h3. Black's answer is forced.

11...f6 12.ef ♖h:f6. 12...ef will

be met by 13.h3 ♗:f3 14.♖e3+.

13. 0-0. White's position is better, no doubt about that. The development of the pieces has been completed and White can try to prepare some pressure on the weak "e7" pawn.

13...♖h5!? Black is trying to complicate realizing that the strategical battle has been already lost. **14.♗g5!?** I didn't mind the enemy pawns on the king-side to go forward, since I thought that my better piece position allowed me to enter complications with a favourable end. The calmer move 14.♗g3 was also enough to preserve the advantage. **14...h6.**

This was necessary to neutralize the threat 15.h3. **15.♗f4 g5 16.♗g3 0-0 17.h3 ♗:f3 18.♗:f3 g4 19.hg ♖:g4 20.♖ad1!** A very strong move. The "d4" pawn needs some extra defence to assure the completion of the knight manoeuvre to "e2".

20...c5! The only move that allows Black to remain in the ring.

21.♖e2! ♗:d4+ 22.♖:d4 cd 23.♖e6+ ♖h8 24.♖:d7 dc.



Diagram 251

We are right in the heat of the tactical battle. Both opponents should be very precise in the calculation of the variations. Luckily for me Danailov was in a terrible time-trouble, so I decided to make use of it playing a little bit non-standard. The prosaic 25.♙:g4 was going to lead to an easy

win i.e. 25...♜:f1+ 26.♚:f1 cb (26...♞h1 27.♚f2 or 26...♜f8+ 27.♚e2 wouldn't change much.) 27.♙:h5 b1♞+ 28.♙d1 ♜f8+ 29.♙g1 ♞b6+ 30.♚h2. Instead of this I played **25.♞d4+? ♙g8** **26.♞:c3?!** Now, the capture of the knight 26.♙:g4 wouldn't be so strong because of 26...♜:f1+ 27.♚:f1cb (27...♞b5+ 28.♙g1 cb? 29.♙e6+) 28.♙:h5 b1♞+ and in comparison with the previous variation the white queen is not placed so favourably on "d4" as on "d7", but still White has an excellent chance for a win. I was rather persistent, though. The capture of the "c3" pawn was rather surprising for Black and my opponent lost a lot of his last remaining seconds to succeed to find **26...♜ac8!** White responded quickly with **27.♞b3+ ♚h8??**. This was a terrible blunder. My approach to the opponent's time-trouble was thus justified, but had Black played the right move 27...♚g7, the game might well have ended in a draw, had Black been able to make all the moves to the time control. White wouldn't have anything better than 28.♞b4. There could follow next 28...♞c5+ 29.♞:c5 ♜:c5 and here the capture of the knight 30.♙:g4? wouldn't work after 30...♜:f1+ 31.♚:f1 ♜g5! Therefore I would have had to play 30.♜e1, but after 30...♙f6 31.♜:e7+ ♜f7 32.♜e2 the draw would have been the most probable outcome. Now everything was over in a flash:

28. ♖:g4 ♘:g4 29. ♕e5+ ♜h7 30. ♜f7+ ♚g6 31. ♜g7+ and Black's flag fell.

You can use as an "one-game" opening the knight move on "f3" after 1.d4 ♘f6. Well, nowadays almost everybody plays so and this move order leads very seldom to unusual positions and most often it is just a matter of transposition of moves. The knight move on "f3" however can bring a surprising opening results if you know the opening preferences of your opponent. In fact it can be used as an original opening system mainly against players that tend to play with Black the Volga gambit, the Benoni defence and the King's Indian defence. Lets try to make a schematic analysis of the position arising after **1.d4 ♘f6 2. ♘f3 c5 3.d5 b5?!**



Diagram 252

Black started some flank operations a little bit too early on move three... White should react, according to the sound principles of the chess strategy, with central actions. Yet, how should White push e2 – e4? The knight can not be developed to "c3" because it would be attacked by the black

"b" pawn, it can't be developed on "d2" either, since the "d5" pawn will be left unprotected. Therefore White should attack with the bishop the knight on "f6" which controls the "e4" square – **4. ♗g5**. Now Black has three principally different continuations: I) To make some indifferent move like 4...d6 or 4...g6; II) To play 4...♘e4; III) To protect the knight with the queen – 4...♚b6. Lets analyse these moves in a row:

➤ **I) 4...g6**. After this move it is highly probable that we can reach an endgame of such a type:



Diagram 253

You think I am telling you some fairy-tales, don't you? You are going to have to be convinced soon that although presently there are thirty two pieces on the board to go quickly into an endgame in this position does not necessarily mean that my imagination has gone beyond control.

So, **4. ...g6 5. ♖:f6 e4 6. e4**. White should be able to secure the "c4" square for his pieces. **6...a6 7. a4 b4 8. ♘fd2**. This knight and not the other one? This is necessary to avoid the exchange of the Black light- squared bishop for the knight. **8...♗g7 9. ♘c4 d6 10. ♗e2**. 10.a5!? was worth considering, but suppose that White does not want to go astray from the abovementioned scheme.

10...f5 11. ef ♗:f5 12. 0-0 0-0 13. ♗g4. Now it is not so difficult already to foresee what is going to happen next. After the exchange of the bishops **13...♗:g4 14. ♘:g4** the exchange of the knights is going to follow. Afterwards the presence of a single open file will lead to the exchange of all the rooks and we are going to have an endgame similar to that one on the diagrammed position. Besides that White will have the option to avoid this course of actions if he likes to and try to follow some other path more interesting, for example to prevent the move f6 – f5 with the help of a bishop on "d3" and Black will be forced all the time to follow suit.

➤ **II) 4...♗e4 5. ♗h4**. Now the essence of the matter is the knight on "e4". If White manages to displace or exchange it and to organize the pawn advance e2 – e4, Black will be subjected to strategical difficulties. Therefore Black should try to prevent the move 6. ♗bd2 and try to attack the "d5" pawn beforehand. **5...♗b7** serves this purpose best.

6.a4! We are not going to lose our time on extravagant variations like 6.♖d3 ♖a5+ 7.c3 f5. White needs to secure a permanent control on the "c4" square. After some calm development like 6.e3 Black will have plenty of time to get rid of the cramping "d5" pawn by means of, lets say 6...♖a5+ 7.c3 e6 with an unclear position.

After the move 6.a4! – 6...b4 looks very ugly for Black at least because of 7.♗:a4. 6...b4 is not any better because of 7.e3 followed by 8.♙c4 and 9.♘bd2. Therefore Black is left with the choice to either play 6...♖a5+ or 6...a6. In case of **6...♖a5+**, the timid 7.c3 leads to an unclear position after 7...e6. White should play actively **7.♘bd2!** leaving the pawn "d5" en prise. Black has a choice, but a rather unpleasant one: to capture the "d5" pawn immediately, to exchange on "d2" and then capture it, or to play 7...ba. The last move is evidently wrong, at least because of 8.c4, therefore we should check the lines in which Black captures on "d5". 7...♙:d5 8.ab ♖b6 (8...♖b5 9.c4 is bad for Black as well as 8...♖b4 9.c4! ♙:c4 10.♗a4; 9...♙b7 doesn't help much after 10.♖c2 and 11.♗a4), and White has the pleasant choice between the calm 9.e3 and the much more active 9.♘:e4 ♙:e4 10.♘d2 ♙b7 11.e4 with a much better position in both lines. The exchange of the knights 7...♘:d2 8.♘:d2 ♙:d5 would not turn around the evaluation of the position. After 9.ab Black can not capture the "b5" pawn (9...♖:b5 10.e4) so the queen has to retreat and White has a clear advantage.

We have to deal now with the move **6...a6**. White can simply play **7.e3** and Black answers suppose **7...♖b6**. Black starts now to attack the advanced enemy pawns with **8.ab ab 9.♗:a8 ♙:a8 10.♘a3 c4 11.♖d4**. Black should try to cause some complications, since the endgame will bring him only troubles because of the pawns on "b5" and "c4". Therefore **11...♖a5+ 12.c3 b4**.



Diagram 254

Black is trying to change the course of actions with just a fragment of his forces, but White is much better developed and should come out of the complications favourably: **13. ♖:c4 ♜a1+ 14. ♗e2 bc 15. ♝:e4 cb 16. ♜fd2**. The "b2" pawn has been stopped and Black is accordingly losing.

> III) **4... ♝b6**. I think that after this move White has all the conditions to try to play sharply i.e. to sacrifice a pawn with **5. ♜:f6!? ♝:f6 6. e4 ♝:b2 7. ♜bd2**. White gets for the pawn a big advantage in development which is soon going to transform into a crushing initiative. For example: **7... a6 8. a4 ba 9. e5!**



Diagram 255

I wouldn't like to step into Black's shoes in this position. The reader can exercise his attacking capabilities after **9...d6 10. ed ed 11. ♜d3**, as well as in the other lines for Black.

We made something like an analysis after **3...b5** and came to the logical conclusion that White should be better. I don't

think it is necessary to make a thorough analysis of this position, since the oncoming tournament practice is going to clarify the matters for certain.

As you have seen, by playing **2. ♜f3** White can avoid the Volga gambit. Besides that, it is not very favourable for Black to play the Benoni defence too. White has a freedom of choice, since the all-important "c4" square is not occupied by

a pawn yet. For example: **1.d4 ♟f6 2.♟f3 c5 3.d5 e6**. The move 3...g6 seems to be better, but then White can reach some position from the Pirc-Ufimcev defence playing **4.♟c3**. Karpov and Kortchnoi reached such a position in the 34th game of their match in Bagio 1978, which happened to decide the match after all. After 3...e6 White does not need to play "c4", but can develop the knight instead. **4.♟c3**. Now if Black exchanges **4...ed 5.♟:d5** there arises a position from the Reti opening: **1.♟f3 d5 2.c4 d4 3.e3 ♟c6 4.ed ♟:d4** and the difference is that White has developed one more piece – the knight on "f3".

The game **Shereshevsky – Gusev**, Lvov 1977 ended in a quick demolition for Black after **4.♟c3 ed?! 5.♟:d5 ♟:d5 6.♟:d5 ♟e7 7.♟g5! ♟c6 8.a3 0-0 9. 0-0-0 ♟b8? 10.e3 b5 11.♟d3 c4 12.♟:h7+** and Black resigned. Naturally, the move 11...c4 was a blunder, but Black was lost anyway. After 11...h6 – 12.♟:h6 gh 13.♟f5 wins and 11...g6 was hopeless after 12.♟h6 ♟e8 13.♟g5. Instead of the preparatory move 9...♟b8 V. Gusev had to play 9...b5 immediately, to be able to answer 10.e3 with 10...c4!?. White could accept the pawn sacrifice with 11.♟:b5 c3 12.bc ♟:a3+ 13.♟d2 and then develop the bishop to "d3" and the king to "e2". This game of course should not be taken too seriously, but still it illustrates well the difficulties Black can meet playing an opening with colours reversed, unsuspecting at that.

In answer to the King's Indian set-ups after **1.d4 ♟f6 2.♟f3 g6**, besides the aforementioned modifications of the Reti opening with colours reversed, I noticed the original character of some schemes beginning with the move **3.♟c3**. Once again we have to refer to the classics.

The famous game Capablanca – Yates, New York 1924 has become a masterpiece of illustration of the endgame super-precision of the Third World Champion of the history of chess. Its opening stage is rather interesting as well. **3...d5**.

This move is practically forced if Black wants to avoid playing the Ufimcev defence. Well, a lot of King's Indian players will be put off by the position of the black pawn on "d5", but usually most of them are even more skeptical towards the Ufimcev defence, since they are used to fight against it with White. As we have already discussed, we are after the psychological effect rather often. **4.♁f4 ♀g7 5.e3 0-0 6.h3 c5 7.dc ♖a5 8.♗d2 ♜:c5 9.♗b3 ♜b6 10.♁e5 e6 11.♗b5 ♗e8 12.♁:g7 ♗:g7** and White achieved some positional advantage. I included the lesson, I learned from this game, in my armour and I exploited Capablanca's scheme against grandmaster V. Savon.

Shereshevsky – Savon **Minsk 1980**

We followed the path of the previous game up to move ten, but when I played 10.♁e5 – 10...♗bd7! was played by Black. It turns out now that 11.♗:d5 ♗:d5 12.♁:g7 ♗:e3 does not bring White anything, neither 11.♁:f6 ♗:f6 12.♗:d5 ♗:d5 13.♜:d5 ♁:b2 is very favourable. I pondered over this position a lot and then I retreated with the bishop to "h2". The game continued: **11.♁h2 a5 12.a4 ♗c5 13.♗:c5 ♜:c5 14.♜d4 ♜:d4 15.ed ♁f5 16. 0-0-0 ♗e4 17.♗:e4 ♁:e4 18.♁f4 ♜ac8** and the opponents agreed to a draw. Capablanca's idea to exchange the dark-squared bishops can be implemented in a much simpler way. Instead of 5.e3 it is sufficient to play **5.♜d2** and if **5...0-0 – 6.♁h6**. Here now **6...c5** is not satisfactory. In my game with the master-candidate A. Belousenko from Minsk I played **7.♁:g7 ♗:g7 8.dc ♖a5 9.e4!** and obtained an extra pawn and won easily. Therefore Black should play either 6...c6 or 6...♗e4. After 6...c6 White can exchange the bishops **7.♁:g7 ♗:g7** and then occupy the "e5" square with 8.♗e5 having in mind a subsequent King-side attack.

The knight manoeuvre to “e4” in somewhat different situation was tried against me by A. Kapengut.

Shereshevsky – Kapengut
Minsk 1977

1.d4 ♖f6 2.♗f3 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.♙f4 ♗g7 5.♖d2 c6 6.h3 ♗e4 7.♗:e4 de 8.♗e5 ♗e6 9.e3 0-0 10.♗e2 f6 11.♗c4 ♖e8 12. 0-0 g5 13.♗h2 f5 14.♗e1 b6 15.♗e5 ♗:e5 16.♗:e5 ♗d7 17.♗h2 ♖f7 18.b3 c5 19.♗ad1 cd 20.♖:d4 ♗fe8 21.♗d2 ♖f6 22.♖:f6 ♗:f6 23.♗ed1 and White's position is almost winning. You can play over this game with annotations in the chapter: "Analyses of Games".

Naturally, by playing 1.d4, 2.♗f3, and 3.♗c3, it is really naive to rely on a substantial opening advantage, but generally speaking it is very difficult to get any opening advantage against a well prepared opponent in the contemporary chess. If you remember, we were talking about "one-game" openings to be able to achieve a position that suits our preferences, a position which should be unpleasant or unexpected for the opponent.

Lately this system has been modernized since White prefers to develop his bishop instead of Capablanca's 6.h3. In the "Chess Informant" 39 we can find the game Rogers – Pribyl, Tallin 1985 in which Black got crushed: **1.d4 ♖f6 2.♗f3 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.♙f4 ♗g7 5.e3 0-0 6.♗e2 b6 7.♗e5 ♗b7 8.h4 ♗fd7 9.h5 ♗:e5 10.de e6 11.hg fg 12.♗d3 ♗d7 13.♖g4 ♗c5 14.♖h3 ♗:d3+ 15.cd ♖f7 16.♗b5 ♖e7 17.♗c1 ♗fc8 18.♖e2 ♗a6 19.♗d4 c5 20.♗f3 h6 21.♗:h6 ♗h8 22.♗g5+ ♖e8 23.♖:e6 ♖:e6 24.♗:e6 ♗:e5 25.♙f4 ♖f7 26.♗:h8** Black resigned. You can play over this game if you like with the thorough comments of grandmaster Rogers in the "Chess Informant". I need to mention that, according to the Australian player, Black made a serious mistake on move 18. Instead of 18...♗a6. Black had to play 18...a6 19.♗d4

♖h8 followed by **h7 – h6** with an approximate equality. Black wouldn't be saved by the move **22...♗g8** (instead of **22...♗e8** because of the beautiful queen-sacrifice **23.♙:g7!! ♖:h3 24.♙f6 ♖:h1 25.♖:h1** with a decisive advantage for White. Something similar happened in the jolly game Rogers – Canfell. The first seven moves were repeated after the previous game, but Black played **8...c5** instead of **8...♖fd7**. The game didn't last very long: **9.h5 ♖bd7 10.hg hg 11.♙b5 ♖:e5? 12.de ♖h5 13.♖:h5! gh 14.♙:h5 f5 15.ef ♖:f6 16. 0-0-0 e6 17.♙g5 ♖f5 18.f4 ♙f6 19.♖h1 ♖:g5 20.fg ♙f5 21.♖f1 ♙h7 22.♙f7+ ♖h8 23.♙:b7** and Black resigned.

My pupil Oleg Romanov managed to achieve something of the sort in his game against Tzarenkov, Minsk 1989. Black played **8...h6?! 9.h5 g5 10.♙:g5! hg 11.h6 ♙h8 12.h7+ ♗g7. 12...♖:h7** will be met by **13.♖:h7 ♖:h7 14.♙d3+** and **15.♙h5.**

13.♙d3 e6 14.♙f3 ♖e4 15.♙h5 ♙f6 16. 0-0-0. 16.f3 deserved attention because after **16...♖g3 17.♙h2 ♖f5 18.♖g4 ♙g6 19.♙e5+ f6 20.♙:e6 ♙c8 21.♙:d5 c6 22.♙b3** White was better. **16...c5?** It was necessary to vacate the "f8" square for the king. **17.f4! ♖g3 18.♙g4 ♖:h1 19.fg ♙f2 20.♙h5.** Black resigned.

I can recommend to you some more recent examples of "power-play" in this variation, i.e. the game Blatny – Goryatchkin, Bad Worishofen 1991, published in the "Chess Informant" 51. Sometimes the play in this variation can be very calm however. I will offer you a game of another of my pupils Alexander Zazhogine who outplayed his opponent easily:

Zazhogine – Schulman
Kobrin 1989

1.d4 ♖f6 2.♖f3 g6 3.♖c3 d5 4.♙f4 c6 5.e3 ♙g7 6.♙e2 ♖bd7 7.♖e5 ♖f8 8.h4 h5 9.♙d3 ♖g4 10.♖:g4 ♙:g4 11.f3 ♙d7 12.♙d2 b5 13.♖e2 ♖e6 14.a4 ♖:f4 15.♖:f4 a6 16.♙f2

♠h6 17. ♖e2 ♗f8 18. ♗c3 ♗g7 19. ♖c1 ♗c8 20. ♖b3 ♗h7
21. ab ab 22. ♗:a8 ♗:a8 23. ♗a1 ♗d8 24. g3 ♗c8 25. ♗a7 ♗e8
26. ♖c5 ♠f5 27. ♠f1 ♗b8 28. ♗a6 ♗c8 29. ♠d3 ♠:d3 30. ♖:d3
♗d6 31. ♖e5 b4 32. ♗c5 ♗e6 33. f4 b3 34. cb ♗b8 35. b4 ♗h3
36. ♖f3 ♗h1 37. ♗:e7 ♠g7 38. ♗:c6 ♗a8 39. ♗:f7 ♗b1
40. ♖g5+ ♗h6 41. f5. Black resigned.

White made an exemplary refutation of the pseudo-active move 12...b5? The manoeuvre 27. ♠f1! followed by 29. ♠d3! dis-coordinating Black's pieces deserves mentioning.

We are going to finish now with the move 2. ♖f3 and deal with the last "one-game" opening in this book, starting with **1.e4 c5 2.d3**.

How did I come to the idea to start the game in this way? At the end of the seventies and at the beginning of the eighties Peter Korzubov, a very talented pupil of mine, had excellent practical results in a lot of competitions. For example in 1978 he won a qualification tournament for the World Championship for "cadets" fighting for this with players like A. Sokolov, Y. Ehlvest and I. Novikov. He took the fourth place there after N. Short was third. Korzubov fulfilled two norms for the IM – title, but he played only twenty two games, while FIDE required at least twenty four. There was no doubt that Korzubov was going to become an IM in his next tournament. Later however, there happened something unpredictable. Suddenly his health deteriorated rapidly and he was dismissed from the Soviet army before the term. Now he participates in tournaments now and then, but he is far from his previous form unfortunately. I had to tell this sad story, since Korzubov preferred to play 1.e4 instead of 1.d4, but he avoided sharp variations in the Sicilian defence and tried to choose lines with quiet strategical play, but he obtained a lot of times positions without good perspectives. I happened to tell him a lot of times jokingly: "Petya, this sight makes me laugh when I look at you how you retreat with the knight to

"b3" and then you are pondering over the way to manoeuvre it back to "f3". We were talking about the Naidorf variation in the Sicilian defence. Korzubov was an experienced master when he played in the First Liga of the Championship of the USSR and it was not easy to change his opening repertoire in a fortnight at his level. Therefore it came to my mind that it was worth for him to avoid the habitual theory in the Sicilian defence for sometime. I had to remember once again the openings with colours reversed. We used to work a lot on the following order of moves in the English opening: 1.c4 d6 2.d4 e5. Now Black is not disturbed at all from the exchange of the queens, since the knight hasn't been developed yet to "f6", and after 3.de de 4.♖:d8+ ♘:d8 5.♗f3 Black can play simply 5...f6 which is not like in the line 1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 d6 3.♗c3 e5 4.de de 5.♖:d8+ ♘:d8 6.♗f3 ♗d7 where White has a very good plan in this position connected with pushing forward the "g" pawn. Besides that we had played over some game of B. Larsen in which the Danish grandmaster played with Black something very interesting, i.e. the following plan: 1.c4 d6 2.d4 e5 3.♗f3 e4 4.♗d2 f5 5.♗c3 ♗f6 6.e3 c6 7.f3 d5 8.♖b3 ♗e7 9.♗e2 0-0 10.fe fe 11.cd cd 12.♗:e4 ♗:e4 13.♗:e4 ♗c6 with a good compensation for the sacrificed pawn. I don't remember whether Larsen did sacrifice the pawn or just recommended it, but it came to my mind that it was possible to play like this with colours reversed.

I tried to check this line in the championship of Bjelorussia in 1983 against E. Motchalov.

Shereshevsky – Motchalov

Minsk 1983

1.e4 c5 2.d3 ♗c6 3.f4 d5 4.♗e2 The most exact order of moves for White in this variation. **4...♗f6 5.e5 ♗d7 6.♗f3 e6 7.c3 f6 8.d4 ♖b6 9.0-0**



Diagram 256

We reached the position I was thinking about. Sometimes White can obtain the same position from the French defence, but to do that White has to find an order of moves in order to lose a tempo (the pawn push $d2 - d3 - d4$ is done in two moves and not immediately).

9...♘e7. Motchalov refrains to accept the sacrificed pawn. The principal line $9...f6$ will be dealt with in the next game. **10.♖h1 0-0 11.♘a3.** Black failed to get the counterplay against the white king, which is typical for analogous positions from the French defence, and now White's advantage due to the excess of space is evident.

11...cd 12.cd ♖d8 13.♘c2 ♗b6 14.e! The moment Black's knight lost control over the "f6" square was the time to change the pawn structure.

14...♗:f6 15.b3 ♘d7 16.♘d3 ♘c8 17.♖e2 ♘d6 18.♘a3 ♖c7 19.♘e5 g6 20.♖ac1. The White's advantage was increasing with every move and now it became decisive. More or less you can find some imprecisions in Black's play, but I think that it was very easy to play with White in this position, while the Black's position had a tendency to worsen right after the opening:

20...♖fe8 21.♖g4 ♘e4 22.♘e3 ♖ad8. In order to defend against the threat $23.♘:d5$, Black misses a tactical stroke – **23.♘:g6.** This almost wraps it up. After $23...hg 24.♖:g6+ ♘g7$ the quickest way to win was $25.♗:e4 de 26.d5$. I hadn't participated in any tournaments for more than an year and I was in a very poor form then. This is sufficient to explain the miracles that happened next. **23...♘g7 24.♗:e4?!** This exchange was far from necessary. Why did I open the "d" file?

24...d6 25.♖e5 ♘c8 26.♗:c6? A nightmarish move. After 26.♗h5, with the idea to bring the knight on "e3" in the attack, the game would have been over in a flash. 26...bc 27.♘c5? e5! I had completely overlooked this move.

28.f5 ed 29.♗c4 ♗h8. Look what I have done to my completely winning position. Fortunately I put myself together and I managed to organize a winning attack in the mutual time-trouble.



Diagram 257

30.♗g5 ♗d5 31.♗d6! ♗ee5
31...♗:d6 did not work because of 32.♘:d6 ♗:d6 33.f6 ♘f8 34.f7 and 35.♗g8#.

32.♗b5! ♗d7 (if 32...cb 33.♘f8) 33.♘:d4 ♗:b5 34.♘:e5 ♗:e5. 35.♗cd1 ♗d5 36.♗:d5 ♗:d5 37.♗e7! ♗g8 38.f6 ♘f8 39.♗:e4 ♗e6 40.♗d4 c5? The last move of the time-control

and a blunder at that. After 40...♗f7 White would need to show some good technique in order to win the game.

41.♗d8 ♗g8 42.f7+ ♗g7 43.♗g5+ and Black resigned. After 43...♗g6 44.♗e5+ ♗h6 45.♗e8 wins.

While we were preparing together with the team of Bjelorussia for the Spartakiada of the People of the USSR in 1983 I showed the system with 2.d3 to grandmaster V. Kupreichik who managed to use it several times successfully.

Kupreichik – Ehlvest

Moscow 1983

1.e4 c5 2.d3 e6 3.f4 d5 4.♘e2 ♗c6 5.♗f3 ♗f6 6.e5 ♗d7 7.c3 f6 8.d4 ♗b6 9. 0-0 cd 10.cd fe 11.fe ♗d:e5 12.♗:e5 ♗:e5. Y. Ehlvest accepts the challenge.

13.♗c3 ♘d7 14.♘a5 ♗c6.



Diagram 258

The position on the diagram seems to be very attractive for White, but it is far from easy to find the right way to develop some initiative. Kupreichik failed to solve this problem in this game. **15. ♖b5?** It was necessary to use this bishop in another direction. After **15. ♗h5+!** g6 **16. ♖f3 ♖:d4+**

17. ♖h1 ♗e7 18. ♖f7+ ♖d8 19. ♗:e7+ ♗:e7 20. ♗e2 Black has two extra pawns, but the king is stuck in the centre and will be subjected to a fierce attack. There could follow for example such a line: **20... a6 (20... ♗f5 21. ♗b5) 21. ♖ad1 ♖e5 22. ♗g4 ♗f5 23. ♗:f5 gf 24. ♖fe1! (24. ♗:d5?! ed 25. ♖fe1 ♖d6 26. ♖:d5 ♖f8 27. ♖g7 ♖:d5 28. ♖f8+ ♖c7 29. ♖:a8 ♗c6 30. ♖g1 f4) 24... ♖d6 25. ♖f6+ ♖c7 26. ♗:d5+! ed 27. ♖c1+ ♖c6 (27... ♗c6 28. ♖e7+) 28. ♖:c6+ bc 29. ♖e5+ ♖b7 30. ♖g7** with a winning position for White.

Kupreichik is having the original idea to continue the attack in the endgame. This idea succeeds only due to a mistake by Black. **15... ♖:d4+ 16. ♖:d4 ♗:d4 17. ♗:d7+ ♖:d7 18. ♖f7+ ♖e8?** Now everything is OK for White. He recaptures one of the sacrificed pawns keeping a strong attack. Black would fare better with **18... ♖c6!** which might bring success, because of the extra material. The position is abundant with tactical possibilities, but we failed to find a clear draw for White. Maybe the reader will manage to do this. The game continued: **19. ♖:b7 h6 20. ♗:d5! hg 21. ♗c7+ ♖d7 22. ♗:a8+ ♖c8 23. ♖:a7 ♖b8 24. ♖a4! ♖b7.** If **24... ♗c5** then **25. b4! ♗a7 26. ♗c7.**

25. ♖f1! ♗e2+ 26. ♖f2 ♗f4 27. ♗f3 ♗d6 28. ♖d1 ♗d5 29. ♖e1 ♖e8 30. g3 ♗b8 31. ♖c1 ♖e7 32. ♖a5 ♖f7+ 33. ♖g4 ♖f5 34. ♖a3 ♗f6+

35. ♖h3 ♗d6 36. ♖b3+ ♜a8 37. ♖c6 ♗c5 38. g4 ♖d5 39. ♖a6+ ♗a7
 40. ♖e6 ♖d7 41. ♖e5 ♖d5 42. ♖e7. Black resigned.

The pawn sacrifice was tested once again in the game Korzubov – Oll, Tallin 1983. Black tried to change the order of moves in the opening. 1. e4 c5 2. d3 e6 3. f4 d5 4. ♗e2 ♖f6 5. e5 ♖fd7 6. c3 ♖c6 7. ♖f3 f6 8. d4 ♖b6 9. 0-0 cd 10. cd fe 11. fe ♖d:e5 12. ♖:e5 ♖:e5 13. ♖c3. Here Black played 13... ♖c6? White is forced now to put the bishop on "b5", but it comes with a vengeance, since the move is almost winning. 14. ♗b5 ♗d7 15. ♗:c6! bc 16. ♗g5 e5? L. Oll's decision to provoke an immediate crisis turns into a disaster for him, but Black's position is more or less hopeless.



Diagram 259

17. ♖a4. P. Korzubov chooses a quiet positional line and effective at that. Instead of this he could try a combination that was going to wipe Black out in a spectacular fashion. After 17. ♖h5+ g6 there could follow the exchange sacrifice 18. ♖:f8+!. Black can not capture now this rook with the king,

because of 19. ♖h6+ ♜f7 20. ♖f1+ ♜g8 (20... ♗f5 21. ♖:f5+ gf 22. ♖f6+ ♜g8 23. ♖e6+) 21. ♗f6, therefore Black has to play 18... ♖:f8. White can play now 19. ♖:h7 ♖:d4+ 20. ♜h1 ♖c5 21. ♖:g6+ ♖f7 22. ♖f1 ♖f8 23. ♗h6 ♖:h6 24. ♖:f7+ ♜d8 25. ♖g8+ ♗e8 26. ♖:d5! with a win. The line that was chosen by Korzubov didn't leave Black any substantial chances to save the game either. There followed: 17... ♖b4 18. a3 ♖d6 19. de ♖g6 20. ♗e3 ♗f5 21. ♖f3 ♗d3 22. ♖f2 ♗e7 23. ♗c5 ♗h4 24. g3 ♖b8 25. ♗d6 ♖b5 26. ♖c5 ♖:c5 27. ♗:c5 ♗d8 28. e6 ♗e7 29. ♗:e7 ♜:e7 30. ♖e3. Black resigned. My pupil

Alexander Riskin found a wonderful idea in this line in an international tournament in active chess in Poland.

Riskin – Kuczyinski

Opole 1991

The opponents repeated the first twelve moves after the games Kupreichik – Ehlvest and Korzubov – Oll, but instead of 13.♖c3 Riskin played **13.♗h5+!**? There followed: **13...g6 14.♗h1! ♖c6**. In case of 14...♖f7 such a line might happen: 15.♗f3 ♗c7 16.♖c3 gh 17.♖b5 ♗d7 18.♗:h5 with the terrible threat 19.♗:f7.

15.♗f3 ♗e7 16.♗h6! ♗d7. If 16...gh then 17.♗g7.

17.♗f7+ ♗d8 18.♗g4 ♗c7 19.♖c3 ♗af8 20.♗:f8 ♗:f8 21.♗:h7 ♗:b2 22.♗fc1 with a winning position for White.

Lets see some more games played in this variation.

Korzubov – Dvoiris

Vilnius 1984

1.e4 c5 2.d3 e6. In the game Korzubov – Glek, Minsk 1983 Black played 2...♖c6 3.f4 d5 4.♗e2 ♖d4 5.♖f3 ♖:e2 6.♗:e2 e6 7.ed ♗:d5 8.♖c3 ♗d8 9.♗e3 ♖f6 10.d4 ♗a5 11. 0-0-0 and Black didn't find anything better than the pawn sacrifice – 11...c4. After 12.♗:c4 ♗b4 13.♗b5+ ♗d7 14.♗:a5 ♗:a5 15.♗d2 ♗c6 16.♗hf1 ♗:c3 17.♗:c3 ♖e4 18.♗d2 ♗d5 19.b3 b5 20.♗a5 f6 21.♖e1 Black's activity annihilated and White won with his extra pawn.



Diagram 260

3.f4 d5 4.♗e2 ♖c6 5.c3 ♖f6 6.e5 ♖d7 7.♖f3 b5 8.♖a3 ♗b8 9.♖c2 b4 10.d4 bc 11.bc ♗e7 12. 0-0 0-0.

The type of position resembles a lot the French defence. Black has opened a file on the queen-side so he can try following A. Nimzovitch's

advice to try to undermine White's pawn chain at its base. White has a lot of trump cards however. The space advantage and the advanced "e5" pawn are reliable prerequisites for a king-side attack. The central outposts of White are long-term, besides White has an excellent piece coordination. So, the position looks about equal and we are to expect an intense fight. Look now how Korzubov outplays his opponent with an admirable ease, moreover Black didn't commit a single blunder.

13. ♖d2! A nice prophylactic move solidifying the "c3" pawn first. **13... ♖b6 14. ♗e3 ♗a5 15. ♖d3 ♖ac4 16. ♖e2 ♖d7.** Black's manoeuvres seem to be quite natural, still the final outcome was unfavourable for him. Maybe having in mind what happened next it was worth to exchange first **16... cd** although Black had to reckon with the move **17. ♗:d4.** We didn't find any obvious mistakes on the part of Dvořák, when we analysed this game with Korzubov and to do a thorough analysis now is definitely outside of the scope of this book.

17. ♗:c4! ♗:c4 18. ♖:c4 dc 19. ♖e3 ♖a5 20. dc ♖:c5 21. ♖:c5 ♖:c5+ 22. ♖f2 ♖c6 23. ♗d4.



Diagram 261

As a result of all this almost forced line the position has been clarified. The white knight is much stronger than the enemy bishop and this advantage will be long-lasting in this position. **23... g6 24. ♖e3 ♖d5 25. ♗f5! ♖fc8 26. ♖:c5 ♖:c5 27. ♗d6 a5 28. ♖d2 ♗f8 29. ♗f2 ♗e7 30. ♗e3 ♖c6**

31. ♖ad1! ♖a4 32. ♗e4 ♖c7 33. ♖f1 ♖c6 34. ♗d6 f6? Black's play in the last ten moves could be improved here and there. The character of the position hasn't been changed a lot.

Dvoiris was in time- trouble now and he decided to try to change the developments radically with his last move. But as it sometimes happens, the medicine didn't cure the illness, but killed the patient instead. Black had to play 34...h5 in order to decrease the quantity of pawns on the king-side and stick to a passive defence.

35.g4 Bf8 36.Bff2! Korzubov once again finds a crystally pure move to increase his positional pressure. **36...♗d7 37.g5 fe?** Black should never open this position. He was obviously out of control and played the rest of the game as a pigeon. By the way even after 37...f5 Black's position was very difficult to hold.

38.fe Bc5 39.B:f8 ♖:f8 40.♗e4 Bc7 41.♗f6 ♗a4 42.Bd8+ ♗g7 43.Bg8+ ♗f7 44.Bh8 Black resigned.

There can be found a striking similarity in the game **Korzubov – Petrushin**, Tallin 1983 which I am going to include here without annotations. Black played the opening originally and industriously and managed to achieve an excellent position. Further on in the middle-game Korzubov outmanoeuvred his opponent convincingly starting with 24.♗e3! – 1.e4 c5 2.d3 ♗c6 3.f4 ♗f6 4.♗f3 d5 5.e5 ♗g4 6.♗e2 f6 7.h3 ♗h6 8. 0-0 fe 9.fe g6 10.c3 d4 11.♖b3 ♗g7 12.♗bd2 b6 13.♗e4 ♗a5 14.♖c2 dc 15.bc 0-0 16.♗g5 ♗b7 17.♗d6 ♗c6 18.♖d2 ♗f5 19.♗:f5 B:f5 20.♗h6 ♖c7 21.d4 cd 22.cd ♗d5 23.Bac1 ♖d7 24.♗e3 Baf8 25.♖c2 B5f7 26.♗h2 e6 27.♗d2 B:f1 28.♗:f1 ♗b7 29.♖b2 ♖d5 30.Bc7 ♖d8 31.♖c1 Bf5 32.♗f3 ♗f8 33.♗d3 Bf7 34.B:f7 ♖:f7 35.♗g5+ ♗g8 36.♗:e6 ♖d5 37.♗f4 ♖:a2 38.♗b1 ♖f7 39.e6 ♖e7 40.♗a2 ♗h8 41.d5 ♖d6. Black sealed the last move, but afterwards resigned without resuming play at the adjournment. To illustrate the possible course of action without queens, here is a game in which White managed to easily prove the advantage of the "e4" pawn over that one on "c5".

Kupreichik – Magerramov

Moscow 1983

1.e4 c5 2.d3 ♘c6 3.f4 d5 4.♗e2 de 5.de ♖:d1+ 6.♗:d1 ♜f6 7.♘c3 e6 8.♗e3 ♗d7 9.♜f3 0-0-0 10.♗e2 ♗e7 11. 0-0-0 ♜g4 12.♗g1 f5 13.h3 ♘h6 14.ef ♘:f5 15.♘e4 ♖hf8 16.c3 ♘h4 17.♘:h4 ♖:f4 18.♘d6+ ♗:d6 19.g3 ♖:h4 20.gh ♗f4+ 21.♘c2 b6 22.♗h2 e5 23.♗g4 ♗:g4 24.♖:d8+ ♘:d8 25.hg ♗:h2 26.♖:h2 ♘d7 27.♖f2 ♘e7 28.♘d3 ♜f7 29.♘e4 Black resigned.

I managed once to test another modification of the line starting with 2.d3.

Shereshevsky – Yurtaev

Gomel 1983

1.e4 c5 2.d3 d5 3.ed ♖:d5 4.♜f3 ♘c6 5.♘c3. In a similar situation in the same opening, but with colours reversed, Black often avoids to attack the queen immediately with the knight, but fianchettoes the bishop first and then develops the knight on "c5". I decided however that having an extra tempo it was worth attacking the queen straight on.

5... ♖d8. Once again there is a small difference in comparison with the analogous position with colours reversed. White often retreats – ♖d4 – d2 with the idea to develop the bishop on "b2" on the long diagonal next. Here however such an approach would be a little bit too much, because of the big delay of development.

6.g3 ♜f6 7.♗g2 e6. Too modest but forced. The pawn on "e5" will be a subject of an attack. 8. 0-0 ♗e7 9.b3! White should have in mind the preparation of the pawn advance d3 – d4. After the opening of the position the fianchettoed bishops will get maximal activity.

9...0-0 10.♗b2 ♖c7 11.♖e2 ♗d8.



Diagram 262

12. Bxd1. Black needs to bring the bishop from c8 to d8 to be able to finish off the development and coordinate his pieces. The move 12...♗d7 is closing off the "d" file and allows White to play 13.d4. Black will have to suffer now from the excellent scope of action of the white bishops and particularly

that Catalan ♗g2 will be a very dangerous one. Black had to play like this anyway. Yurtaev hesitated for half an hour and changed the pawn structure instead.

12...♖d4?! 13.♖:d4 cd 14.♖b5 ♗b6 15.a4 ♗c5. Now it was my turn to think about the position seriously. I had to find a way to prevent Black to finish off the development at any rate.

16.♗e5! The pawn on "d4" is attacked as well as the "c7" square.

16...♖d7 17.♗g5 f6 18.♗h4 ♖f8. Black is about to finish his development and to equalize. I had to look for a tactical solution once again.

19.b4! ♗:b4 20.♗:d4 ♗c5 21.♗:c5 ♗:c5.



Diagram 263

White is getting some advantage, but still Black threatens 22...a6 which creates the optical illusion that Black is going to offer a serious resistance. White's next move however arranges the puzzle.

22.♗c4!! It is a pleasure to make moves like that. Some

times this is more effective than a brilliant combination.

22... ♖:c4?!. This is the line in which Black will put up the least resistance. Now White's endgame advantage will be overwhelming although the other moves by Black wouldn't change much.

23.dc ♖:d1 24.♖:d1 ♘f7 25.c5. White is not in a hurry to win a pawn with 25.♗d6+ and continues to improve the position calmly.

25... ♖b8?! 26.♗a7 ♗d7 27.♖b1. Black resigned. 27... ♗:a4 will be met by 28.c6.

To dissuade the reader that I may be trying to convince him that playing 2.d3 will lead White to an automatic advantage, here is the opening of the game **Korzubov – Danailov**, Pernik 1984 in which Black solved the opening problems nice and easy.

1.e4 c5 2.d3 ♗c6 3.f4 g6 4.♗f3 ♗g7 5.c3 d6 6.♗e2 e6 7.0-0 ♗ge7 8.♗e3 f5! 9.♗bd2 0-0 10.♗g5 h6 11.♗h3 b6 12.♗f3 ♗b7 13.♖e2 ♖d7 14.♗f2?! ♖ae8 and it is White already who has to seriously think about equalizing. The game ended in a draw, although Black had an advantage throughout the game.

In conclusion I would like to emphasize once again that it is my opinion that systems like that should be included in the armour of every good chess player. But the title of the chapter must remind you that you should never have them as your main weapon, but just play them from time to time, otherwise sooner or later your opening preparation will come to a dead end.

I would like now to add something to this chapter. I wrote it sometime in the summer of 1991 and then I played some more games that I think will be a good addition to the material we had up to now.

Shereshevsky – Apicella

Budapest 1991

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♁g5 ♘e4 3.♂h4 c5 4.f3 g5 5.fe gh 6.e3 ♖b6?! As we already know 6...♂h6 is more precise to force the white king to the "f2" square.

7.♘c3 ♂h6? And now this move is a mistake. Black refrained from developing this bishop on "h6" on the previous move, accordingly he should have continued with the same policy and play 7...e6 instead.

8.♘d5! ♖d8. The French player is readily admitting his mistake. It was interesting to sacrifice a rook with 8...♖g6. After 9.♘c7+? ♘d8 10.♘:a8 ♖:e4 Black would have had an excellent compensation, but White would have played simply 9.♖f3 with the idea to bring the knight from "g1" to "f4". It is worth mentioning though 8...♖a5+ 9.c3 e6 wouldn't work because of 10.♖h5! ed? 11.♖e5+.

9.♖h5 ♁g7 10.♖:h4 cd 11.♖g3 ♘f8.



Diagram 264

12.ed!? White prefers initiative to the material. The complications after 12.♘c7 de 13.♘:a8 ♖a5+ 14.c3! ♁:c3+ 15.♖e2 will probably be favourable for White and I would have played so, had I not another line that looked tempting. I am not different from most of the players who prefer

to attack with equal material instead of defending having the material advantage.

12...♁:d4 13. 0-0-0 ♁g8 14.♖h4. In case of 14.♖c7 ♁b6 15.♖f4 e6 16.♘f6 Black had 16...♁e3+

14...♘c6 15.♘f3 ♁g7 16.♘g5.



Diagram 265

19...♙:b2+ 20.♚:b2 ♖g7 21.♜c7! ♜f8 22.♞hf1! Black resigned.

Shereshevsky – Hazai Budapest 1991

1.d4 g6 2.e4 ♗g7 3.♞c3 d6 4.♗g5 c6 5.♞d2 b5 6.f4 b4.

White is concentrating forces in the centre, while Black is doing something on the queen-side.

7.♞d1 ♞b6 8.c3 a5?! 9.♞e3 ♗a6 10.♗:a6 ♞:a6 11.♞e2 ♞f6 12.♞g3.



Diagram 266

16...h6? This was a decisive mistake in a bad position. The last move of Black ignores the tactical threats of the opponent and is too optimistic. **16...♞e5** was a must.

17.♞:f7! ♚:f7 18.♞h5+ ♚f8 19.♗c4. The attack of the white rook is irresistible. There followed:

You don't need to be a strategical genius to be able to see that White has a clear positional advantage. White needs to castle, then bring the queen's rook to "e1" and then to shatter the enemy position in the centre by means of the pawn thrust e4 – e5.

12...h5. L. Hazai tries to alter the unfavourable developments with a king-side divert action.

13.e5! As we have already mentioned White should be always on the alert to play actively and sometimes decisively in this opening system.

13...d7 14.ed! f6. The tactical motivation of White looked like: In case of 14...g5 15.fg ed 16.c4 c7 17.e3+ Black wouldn't have the move 17...e7 because of 18.d:d6+ and after 17...f8 18. 0-0 Black's position would be pathetic.

15.d3! f7 16.de! Another blow.

16...e8. The continuation 16...fg 17.fg would have presented White a crushing attack.

17. 0-0 e:e7 18. c4 d8.



Diagram 267

19. e5+?! White played excellently up to now and obtained a winning position, but now this move is a little bit away from the main strategical idea in this position. We remember that Capablanca used to teach that the most beautiful way to win a game is the simplest one- most of the times. Having this in mind

the not so spectacular move 19. h4! would be much more effective. 19. e5+ is still not failing to win, though.

19...e:e5 20. f6 e3 21. e:e3 d:f6 22.f5 g5?! It is understandable that the opening of the "f" file was far from being attractive for the Hungarian player, but still to give up a third pawn was hardly advisable. **23. e:g5 e:h8 24. e:g6+ f8 25. e:a1 c7.** 25...e:h6 was hopeless after 26. e6.

26. e4 d:e4 27. e:e4 e:h6 28. e:g3. After the prosaic 28. e:h6 d:h6 29. e:h4 Black would have to suffer a lot as well, but the text move wins even faster.

28...e8 29.f6! d:f6 30. e:d6+ Black resigned.

Shereshevsky – Raicevic

Doiran 1992

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♁g5 e6 3.e4 h6 4.♁:f6 ♖:f6 5.♘c3 ♗b4
6.♚d2 c5!? This is an interesting decision. Black is trying to
attack the enemy centre immediately not to allow the move f2
– f4. 7.e5 ♖e7 8.a3 ♗a5. After 8...cd 9.ab dc 10.♚:c3 0-0
11.b5 White is much better.



Diagram 268

9.b4! White needs to play energetically, otherwise Black will destroy the enemy centre remaining with the strong bishop pair. **9...cd.** If 9...cb then 10.♘b5 ♘c6 11.ab ♗:b4 12.c3.

10.♘b5 ♗b6 11.♘d6+ ♖d8
12.♘f3 ♘c6 13.♗b5 f6 14.♗:c6
bc 15.♘:d4.



Diagram 269

15...♗c7? Up to now both opponents played well, but now Black had to snatch the "e5" pawn cold-bloodedly. After 15...fe 16.♘6f5 ♖f6 17.♘:c6+ ♖e8 (17...♗c7? 18.♚d6+ ♖b7 19.♘a5+ ♗:a5 20.ba) 18.♘d6+ ♖f8 19.♘a5! (19.♘e4? ♖h4 20.♚d6+ ♖g8 21.♘e7+ ♖f7) a very interesting position would have arisen:



Diagram 270

This position is crucial for the evaluation of the previous actions of the opponents. It will need a lot of analyses, but I definitely prefer White. Lets go back to the game.

16. ♖f3 fe 17. 0-0-0 ♖f8
18. ♗:e5 ♖:f2 19. ♗c3? I was sticking to the principle "don't hurry". I saw that after 19. ♗:c8

♗:c8 20. ♗c3 it would be impossible for Black to defend the "d7" square, but I was thinking abstractly and decided that after 19. ♗c3 White is increasing the pressure preserving all the threats. I missed however a hidden counterplay. **19... ♖e2!**
20. ♗b1. It was impossible to take on "c8" because of 20... ♗g5+.

20... ♖e3. Now 20... ♗g5 would be followed by 21. ♗e8+.

21. ♗b2 ♖a6. Black's inventiveness was sufficient to avoid the immediate catastrophe. **22. b5?** The reason behind this mistake was my bad calculation of variations. 22. ♗dc4! was not so difficult to find after which the line 22... ♖:c4 23. ♖:d7+ ♗:d7 24. ♗:d7 ♗:d7 25. ♗:g7+ ♗c8 26. ♖d1 ♖d5 27. ♖f1 was leading White to an easy win.

22... ♖b8? The Yugoslavian grandmaster was in a time-trouble so he made a decisive mistake. It was necessary to play 22...cb 23. ♗f5 ef 24. ♖:d7+ ♗:d7 25. ♗:d7 ♗:d7 26. ♗:g7+ ♗c6 27. ♖d1 ♖c8! We missed this opportunity both of us. The game would turn into lines very favourable for Black. Now White obtains a material advantage and wins effortlessly. The game ended in the following way: **23. ♗f5 ef 24. ♖:d7+ ♗:d7 25. ♗:d7 ♗:d7 26. ♗:g7+ ♗e6 27. ♗:h6+ ♗e7 28. ♗f4 ♖b7 29. ♗g5+ ♗e6 30. ♗g6+ ♗e5 31. ba ♖b8 32. ♖f1 ♖d4+ 33. ♗c1 ♖f8 34. ♗g7+ ♖f6 35. g4 ♗d5 36. ♖d1 ♖:a3 37. ♖:d4+.** Black resigned.

I am not trying to convince you that it is sufficient for White to play 2. $\text{\textcircled{A}}g5$ to win the game, so now you are going to see a game in which the final outcome was favourable for Black.

Shereshevsky – Bogdanovski

Doiran 1992

1. $d4$ $\text{\textcircled{N}}f6$ 2. $\text{\textcircled{A}}g5$ $d5$ 3. $\text{\textcircled{A}}:f6$ ef 4. $e3$ $\text{\textcircled{A}}e6$ 5. $\text{\textcircled{D}}d2$ $c6$ 6. $\text{\textcircled{A}}d3$ $\text{\textcircled{A}}d6$. White decided to develop the bishop to "d3", while Black intended to bring the knight to "f6" immediately after the advance of the "f" pawn to avoid the necessity to protect the "f5" pawn with $g7 - g6$. Black allows White to push forward the "e3" pawn. 7. $\text{\textcircled{D}}e2$. Now, as well as on the next move, White could have played $e3 - e4$, but that would lead to an entirely different position. 7... $\text{\textcircled{D}}d7$ 8. $b3$ $f5$ 9. $c4$ $\text{\textcircled{N}}f6$ 10. $\text{\textcircled{A}}c2$ $\text{\textcircled{D}}e4$. Black managed to build his position without the move $g7 - g6$.

11. $0-0$ $0-0$ 12. $c5$ $\text{\textcircled{A}}c7$ 13. $b4$.



Diagram 271

White is keeping to the main strategical line. Black should try to look for a counterplay on some other part of the board.

13... $\text{\textcircled{A}}d7$ 14. $a4$ $\text{\textcircled{B}}e8$ 15. $\text{\textcircled{D}}f3$ $\text{\textcircled{B}}e6$ 16. $b5$ $\text{\textcircled{B}}h6$. Black threatens to sacrifice the bishop, which forces White to weaken his king-side. 17. $g3$ $\text{\textcircled{A}}e7$ 18. bc bc 19. $\text{\textcircled{B}}ab1$ $\text{\textcircled{A}}c8$.



Diagram 272

20. $a5$? It is not easy to imitate T. Petrosian. White does not anticipate the forthcoming danger and continues to play on the queen-side in a state of oblivion. My last move can be associated with the ancient Japanese ritual of "hara-kiri". I was in a very bad form then and

I was calculating only variations (cooperative though) of the type 20...♙:a5? 21.♖a4 ♘c7 22.♙a6 and the White's initiative on the queen-side was increasing. It was necessary to turn to some prophylactics on the king-side like: h2 – h4, ♖g2, ♗h1 and then think about activities on the queen-side.

20...g5! This is right on the spot. Black prepares to open the position with f5 – f4 and 21.♗fe1 would not prevent this, because Black takes the "a5" pawn with tempo. White failed to cope with the king-side attack of the opponent in this game and lost without any fight actually. The time-trouble was hardly the cause of all that.

21.a6 f4 22.ef gf 23.♖c1 ♙g4 24.♜e5 ♙:e5 25.de ♙:e2 26.♙:e2 ♖:e5 27.♗b7 ♗f6 28.♖b2 ♖:b2 29.♗:b2 f3 30.♙d1 ♜:c5 31.♗a2 ♗b8 32.♗a5 ♗b5 33.♗a3 ♜e4 34.♗e1 ♗b1 35.♗d3 ♗a1 36.♗f1e3 ♜c3. White resigned.

Studying the classics

There is a well known universal truth that anybody who would like to envisage the future should be well acquainted with the past first. If we try to stick to this maxima in the field of chess we have to expect that the young man can have the chance to introduce something new in chess and to become a really good player only if he is very well familiar with the games of the chess masters of the past. I am not quite sure though that this assumption is necessarily true about chess and I don't think that the contemporary player should waste a lot of time to study the games of Philidor, Labourdonnais, Anderssen and even Morphy. I emphasize that is only my humble opinion. Yet, we can not talk about anything like chess erudition if the chess player hasn't played over and over again the games of Rubinstein, Nimzovitch, Capablanca,

Alekhine and this list can be added to with a lot of other names as well. Unfortunately, the study of the legacy of the classics is usually done in a chaotic way. Most of the times the coaches themselves are not very well familiar with the matter, and exercises today on Alekhine's games, tomorrow Rubinstein's and then Lasker's and so on, would not bring anything substantial to the aspiring student to enable him to get a clear picture of the development of the chess history. On the other hand instructions like: "Here you have a book. Study Lasker's games and you will become a very good defender." are not appropriate either and will not bring any improvement to the young player. Therefore, you have to be much more systematic when you study the chess classics. Unfortunately, I failed, just like most of the players who attended the Palace of Pioneers as well as the children and junior chess-courses, to get a proper education in this aspect, so I had to fill this gap later after I had become a master.

When I started to work as a coach I was repeatedly asking myself "Were we educated properly after all?". Most often the right answer was negative. Little by little, I studied and taught about classics and I managed to find the way to the right course which is as necessary as it is useful to the young player. I would like to emphasize, however that I am looking upon this course from the point of view of a professional coach, while it is intended to be helpful to the competitive player.

The chess players that I have been teaching usually start with the theory of Steinitz. This theory marks the beginning of the period of the contemporary chess.

We have read a lot about the games and the concepts of the first official World-Champion. I usually advise my pupils to start with the chapter "Positional play" from "Textbook of Chess" of Lasker and the paragraph devoted to Steinitz in the "Chess Lectures" of M. Euwe. In his "Textbook of Chess"

Lasker gave an excellent philosophical explanation of the Steinitz's theory. I am going to offer you some excerpts:

"... Wilhelm Steinitz postulated some principles of the chess strategy.

Those principles may sound too abstract, but more or less they are basically connected with real life itself. There are a lot of thoughts brilliant and attractive at first sight, but far away from real life in comparison with the majority of basic sound truths. To be able to separate the true principles from the false ones, Steinitz had laboriously and carefully come to the essence of the art of Morphy. He came to the roots of the matter and he told the world: "This is the idea of chess, that one which caused chess to be invented after all, thousand years ago. You just watch and don't be in a hurry to make conclusions, since this is something great and I can't cope up with it.

The world was ignorant though and laughed at that contemptuously. "This bearded man thinks that he has invented something great, does he? Well, he may play well this game, so what? He is a very good practical player, so chess is something like billiards, or the dice-games – you exercise a lot – you play well. But can some player teach so serious things? The chairs of the university professors are usually occupied by adults after all, and not by easy-going, game-playing children."

The world was not perceptive enough in this case. In fact just the opposite was true. Steinitz was a thinker well up to the level of a university and even above. On the contrary, he was not a genius player. He was too profound for that. He was beaten by a real player and died without being appreciated deservedly by his contemporaries. I, as his conqueror, think I ought to pay a tribute to what he has done and to give the rightful evaluation of his legacy.

The concepts of Steinitz derived from the principle that every chess plan should be based on something substantial. The mankind has long been informed that everything in this world should have its due reason. A lot of thick books had been written on "matters of reason" like the famous book of Schopenhauer "About the Four Square-root of the Law of Enough Reasoning". Nevertheless, all that abundant literature does not treat the problem of the foundation of the plan. The foundation of the plan is not the reason stipulating the need of the change, just like to light up a match causes the, not existing before, flame to appear. This is not the cause of knowledge, because plan itself is neither knowledge, nor the motive of action. We are not interested why X chooses some peculiar plan, it is much more important for us to know why this particular plan in this particular position yields better results than some other.

Until Steinitz, nobody had a clear idea about the essence of chess-reasoning. Steinitz felt that the plan, necessarily as a rule, should be based on something different, than what was considered before, to accomplish successful results in competitive play. He thought that the assumption that the plan should be the brainchild of the genius of the player and the creative inventiveness of the chess master is a priori wrong. Steinitz felt that the basis for the formation of a successful plan should not lay in the personality or the perceptions of the player, but instead should be a consequence of the existing state of affairs present on the chess board. He considered proper to look for it, not in a form of some combination, but instead in something entirely different, i.e. in the objective **evaluation** of the position. This is the crux of the matter of what Steinitz thought and this led him to the creation of the theory he offered to the chess world."

"The world failed to understand the genius of Steinitz and the chess players followed suit. Yet, his thinking was as a

revolution, it could be applied not only in chess, because what is chess after all? – but in all kinds of reasonable human activities aimed at the achievement of a certain goal."

"This basic principle can be formulated briefly in the following way: *the basis of the planning of the master should be the evaluation of the position.*

To evaluate means to discuss critically, to weigh. The creation of this plan should be based on the knowledge derived from the evaluation and not on some forced lines. If for example, the master considers the rook to be stronger than a knight with some pawns- in a certain position, he decides to play for a win and accordingly he tries to restrict the enemy king. The process of evaluation is similar to the weighing of something heavy – pharmacist's scales are the most precise and in comparison to them our feeling is imperfect. Still, our approximate evaluation should suffice, since it is the best that we can rely on. The chess game offers as a try for perfection -only the field of combination play and only partially at that."

"It is highly probable that Steinitz had a heartbeat when he perceived that it is fruitless to look for a winning combination if you don't have any substantial advantage. Still he was probably afraid to give publicity to all this, since he was living at times when it was considered a matter of honour to look for a winning combination without having a second thought at the critical evaluation of any positional aspects."

"Steinitz was, however a profound thinker and he didn't leave it at that, since it was not part of his nature to stop only at principles with a restricted practical use. Therefore, his theory was formulated with a scope going outside of the mere aim to improve the competitive play. Why? He was not understood by anybody, yet he had his own deep reasoning. Steinitz established the concept of "Balance of Position" and many times it applied to situations away from chess. Poor old chess

couldn't even appreciate that, since principles like that apply to life as well as philosophy.

To understand the concept of compensation is very useful for the practical player. When some of the advantages at the disposal of my opponent are compensated by some advantages at my disposal- the position is "balanced".

In cases like this, – Steinitz formulated a principle, – you should refrain from attacking if you want to win, since equal positions, after proper play from both sides, usually lead to equality. Only if something in the position is disbalanced, the side that has the advantage should strive for an attack with the intention to win. Here Steinitz was up to the level of a true philosopher, since he affirmed that he who has the advantage should attack, otherwise he might lose the advantage.

This "should" happens to be something like a law of ethics which is not easy to follow.

... Entirely opposite to the aforementioned strategy of attack is the Steinitz's-formulated strategy of defence. He, whose position is worse, should intend to defend and readily so – going sometimes to further compromises. Yet, he should apply the principles of economy – make only forced, partial and minute concessions and nothing more. This comprises the principle of defence in its inner ethics.

M. Euwe's formula is much more punctual. He is formulating Steinitz's principles one by one. Here are some of his considerations: "The basic principle of Steinitz is: "Make a plan according to the evaluation of the position." These words are clearly reflecting the Steinitz's opinion about the attacking style of his contemporaries. You should attack only if some positional factors motivate the attack. This is the logic which led Steinitz to the theory of *accumulation*, according to which you should start an attack only if you have piled up enough small advantages. Steinitz emphasises the importance of

these small advantages like, for example better bishop, occupation of the centre, better piece mobility etc.

Advantages like this should be classified in two groups: I) Temporary II) Long-lasting (sound). For example the initial advantage in development dissolves later on in the game. On the contrary, the better pawn structure (the opponent has some doubled pawns) is not so easy to liquidate or compensate.

We can number the following main aspects of positional evaluation:

- 1. Advantage in piece-development (temporary).
- 2. Better piece mobility (temporary as well as long-lasting sometimes).
- 3. Occupation of the centre (temporary and long-lasting).
- 4. Exposed enemy king (temporary and long-lasting).
- 5. Weak squares in the enemy position (temporary and long-lasting).
- 6. Better pawn structure (long-lasting).
- 7. Pawn majority on the queen-side (long-lasting).
- 8. Possession of open files (long-lasting).
- 9. Possession of two bishops against a bishop and a knight or against two knights. (long-lasting)

It becomes obvious now that the efforts of the opponents should be aimed at the accumulation of long-lasting small advantages and at the same time the conversion of the temporary advantages into long-lasting ones.

The main lesson we can derive from the Steinitz's theory is the following: the chess game should be played according to a plan which is an objective consequence of the proper evaluation of the position.

The theory should be constantly in touch with the competitive practice. The games of Steinitz, however are not particularly illustrative of his theory. He was too keen on

experiments and fell the victim to a plenty of mistakes. Tarrash's games are much more appropriate for that as well as his brilliant book "The Contemporary Chess Game" and A. Rubinstein's games necessarily too. The course of chess classics can be extended and simplified as well. If we settle on a short course, the theory of Steinitz can be divided into the following parts: the chapter "Positional Play" from the Lasker's book and the games of Rubinstein from the book of Rasuvaev and Murahvery "Akiba Rubinstein". The first five games I recommend to be just played over, while starting with the sixth, you should try to play the opening and further to cover Rubinstein's moves with something, and try to find each move yourselves if you can. After the game it would be useful to mention your impressions in a special notebook with one or two phrases. For example:

Vidmar – Rubinstein
Prague 1908.



Diagram 273

Black refrained from the development of his knight to "c6" on move 5, and now by means of 12...♘bd7 he tried to prove the advantage of the knight on "b6" over the knight on "c3" in a symmetrical endgame.

It is not very probable though, that the young player, even after having read the aforementioned literature, is ever going to get a proper picture of the Steinitz's theory without the helping hand of the coach along the way. The main lesson, I emphasise, should be that the plan is the logical consequence of the evaluation of the position. Nowadays the

whole concept of positional evaluation tends to get overlooked more or less. The young players are playing over a huge amount of contemporary games in certain openings, pay attention to similar ideas and schemes and fail to even notice why one side or the other is playing according to a definite plan which has long become standard. Such a player sometimes might easily find himself in an unfamiliar situation in which he will fail to find the habitual path, so his only light-house will be the calculation of the variations. Well, it is impossible to play chess without calculations of variations, yet the main difference between the human player and the computer is that man has faculties much more profound, rational and variable.

It is my opinion that the best book illustrating the originality and complexity of the process of thinking during the era of Steinitz is the book of E. Znosko – Borovsky "The Middle Game in Chess". Unfortunately, this book was published in the USSR in 1925 and nowadays it is a bibliographical rarity. I have to quote some rather large parts of it, since it would be impractical for me to recommend to you to look for it in the library. Besides, you can't omit any words from the text of a song. Here is the opinion of A. Alekhine about this book: "... He was about to finish at that time the brilliantly conceived book "The Middle Game of Chess". I am saying – conceived, because the method of the development of the theme and some of the concepts of the author differ from some of my views. But the fact itself, that the author is trying to proclaim and support the necessity to attribute to the analytical approach to the structure of the chess fight- a second-place importance is admirable. He wants to stress that the importance of finding of universal laws of generalization should be given first priority, possible to comply with the then familiar semi-scholastical "science" – this idea is already a very nice asset to the treasury of the chess history. To create

is difficult, is it not? A. Znosko – Borovsky is no doubt one of the most eminent contemporary chess minds.” This acclamatory characteristics, given by Alekhin, should tell us a lot. Once we started treating history, we have to talk a little bit about Evgeny Alexandrovitch Znosko – Borovsky. In the magazine “Shakhmati in USSR” No. 11 for 1990 we can find the material “Pieces of Broken Kaleidoscope” by S. Voronkov. We learn from it that Znosko – Borovsky was not only a chess player, but he was a gifted theatre, literature and music critic as well. He used to write essays on Blok, Ahmatova, Andrey Bel, Gumiljov and was the second of the latter in his duel with Voloshin.

“... We just start to realize what “Evgeny A... ” represented. Naturally, it is still too early to make any definite conclusions about him, but it seems to me that the apologists of our “chess socialist – realizm” should feel at least a little embarrassed” – Voronkov wrote... The Russian player died in December 1954 and this sad occasion was mentioned by all the newspapers and magazines in the world. This is a part of the New York – published “New Russian Word”: In a sanatorium near Paris -E. A. Znosko – Borovskii died after a prolonged illness. He was a famous chess-master and theoretician. Not long ago the French Chess-Federation celebrated his seventieth birthday.

It is hardly worth mentioning that the Soviet press failed to acknowledge his death, just like as in the beginning of the thirties – it remained impartial to his jubilee.”

We have to start our study of the book “The Middle Game in Chess” and we will put our emphasis on the evaluation of the position.

W. Steinitz established that the chess game is played in three dimensions: time, space and forces. Everything is clear with space and forces (the material on the board), while time has always been evaluated in an artificial way, while

somehow approximately, it can be compared with the accumulation of the advantage of the development of pieces. For example, after the moves: 1. d4 d6 2. Ag5 de4 3. Ah4 c5 4. d2 d:d2 5. c:d2 cd 6. df3 dc6 7. d:d4 cb6 8. 0-0-0 d:d4 9. c:d4 c:d4 10. e:d4 we come to a position from the game **Shereshevsky – Mordasov**, Rostov on Don, 1977.



Diagram 274

If we try to calculate the useful moves of the pieces from the initial position we are going to notice that White has four moves: 0-0-0, e4, Ag5, Ah4 while Black has none. Accordingly White should have an advantage of time, let's assume three moves. The contemporary chess-player,

without having a second thought, will say that White has a small advantage due to the better development and he will be far from making a precise calculation of moves. Later, though, White won playing g2 – g4, Ag2 with a strong pressure on the opponent's queen-side, but this was due to the bad play of the opponent and not so much to the tiny advantage in development.

In his book Znosko – Borovsky tried to evaluate a lot of different positions and to formulate the plans on the basis of the ratio between the aforementioned three elements. He did not neglect the role of intuition: "What is the data upon which we can make a reliable qualitative evaluation? Is it some unexplainable feeling impossible to define, something mystical, or we can rely on some objectively existing data?"

No doubt this feeling plays a vital role and its importance is embodied in the evaluation of the position, as well in the formation and the execution of the plan. Its importance

increases when the position becomes inferior, its characteristics are deeper inside, and the superiority of this feeling in the different players becomes less noticeable.

It is possible to say that one of the obvious effects of this particular feeling is to be able to perceive the peculiarities of the position, before they have become evident. Sometimes, when the player is not so gifted, he will fail even to consciously acknowledge all that and later, when the consequences will be irreparable, there will be nothing left to be done.

Therefore this feeling will help us to find the right plan, which will be even more dangerous for the opponent, because the latter, if he fails to understand all the peculiarities of the position, will not consider this plan to be "threatening".

Further, Znosko-Borovsky makes a comment that we are going to deal with again later after we finish studying his work: *"We don't have to lessen the role of the objective factors: since no doubt chess is a very objective game and we will fail if we try to explain it with subjective perceptions and effects. We don't have to generalize however that, since we feel the not so obvious qualities of the position, they are not objectively real and present, i.e. existing. They haven't appeared so strikingly yet, because we need to imply a touch much more flexible and precise than the formal criteria which we have been using up to now."*

The most interesting part for us in Znosko-Borovsky's book is the chapter: "The Formation and Execution of the Plan" and I am going to make several large citations from it:

"The plan is not formulated unexpectedly in a certain moment of the game in all its aspects and peculiarities. It is conceived little by little after the first move and gradually assumes its final form in the process of development of the game. It is still possible however to point to a certain moment in every game, when the further course of action can and will be predicted in a more or less definite way.

The competitive player should try from time to time to make a general evaluation of the position and put to the test- his basic approach to the game. This is of a large practical use- to be able to get away from the power of the effect of the moves you have made. In this way you go away from the chain of reasoning and you concentrate on the distant aim to win. Very often the spectators manage to notice much more of what is happening in the game, than the players themselves and it is a well known fact. One of the reasons for this is that the spectator is not affected by the, already made, good and bad moves and he is capable of a fresh apprehension of each new position and the forthcoming possibilities.

It will be of course an absolute mistake to think that it is possible when you make a plan to anticipate all the possibilities, since the chess game is very rich and complex, and the human mind is incapable of that. What is important is -to set the main direction of the development of the game and to realize the opposition that the opponent is expected to offer. If the plan is the right one and if it is accomplished in the proper way-the hurdles that the opponent will put on our way should be overcome and our plan is not going to suffer, or get deviated from the rightful path.

By the way, this deflection will not necessarily be a drawback, since it can often be caused by a new development in the game, which might cause us to reach for new goals even more substantial and rewarding than the previous ones. Finally, the chess game represents a struggle, in which you usually set yourself great tasks, yet sometimes you comply with minute achievements, having in mind only the future win and avoiding an eventual loss. As you can see every plan is based on the evaluation of the position, on its character, on its strong and weak sides. This evaluation is the

starting point of our plan- therefore you need to be extremely careful while you are making it.

It is of paramount importance to establish not only the features of the position, but clarify to yourself who is better, who has the advantage.

We know that some of the advantages can belong to either side – one of the sides can have advantages of one element or more, and the other side in another elements. It is important to be able to make a final conclusion, on the basis of the data that I mentioned earlier, since that will help you to determine the course of actions that you are going to choose.

There is nothing more ruinous than to engage into an open fight having an inferior position, or start defending when actually you have the better position.

When you realize who has advantages and what kind of, you begin to understand how you should play: actively, passively, attack, defend, exchange etc. Accordingly you determine your aim in this particular game and the stages you should pass over to be able to accomplish it.

... Lets have a look now at a position, in which White has no reason to play actively, but still the time for a passive defence hasn't come up yet.



Diagram 275

(This position is from a game between Lasker and Capablanca, but unfortunately in his book –Znosko-Borovsky never mentions when and where a certain game has been played.)

Each side has an equal number of pieces. As for time, White has only one extra move (

nine against eight useful moves for Black). It is curious however, that Black made three moves with pawns only, but still he managed to develop all his pieces, while White's bishop remains at the initial position hindering the movements of the rook. This particular thing should attract the attention of the player, so he should be able to find the reason, accordingly he might be able to notice the importance of time in general, and the comparable worth of the situation for both sides.

We have to finish first the general analysis of the position. If we talk about space -Black pushed some pawns on the queen-side, while White has a pawn in the centre on the fourth rank, and at the same time Black's pawns haven't been pushed further than the third rank. This advantage is generally very little and it is even hardly an advantage here, because it would be unfavourable for Black, if he had a pawn on the fourth rank, because then on "d5" or "f5" White could advantageously place some piece, particularly a knight, threatening the enemy position dangerously. Now, if Black plays b5 – b4 -the White knight on "c3" has nowhere to go, therefore this knight, which is placed on supposedly the best square for the knight, is in fact misplaced.

It is curious to notice additionally that although the white pawn has reached the fourth rank in the centre, while Black's pawns haven't come up any further than the third, despite that White has in the big centre (the ranks and files 3 – 6 – c – f) one piece more than Black and controls the two central files "d" and "e" ; Black has much more squares under control in the centre – only four squares in the centre are not controlled by Black, while White does not control five squares.

Evidently, it is important not to omit to notice any of the features of this position.

In fact the piece dislocation is entirely in favour of Black. All his pieces are excellently developed on the best squares and

are interconnected. Both bishops occupy long free diagonals, and one of them is attacking White's central pawn. The knight is very well placed threatening the central pawn and in case it gets pushed forward – the knight will have a free access to the wonderful outpost on "d5". It is much better placed than its counterpart- the knight on "c3" which is threatening nothing, defends the "e4" pawn and has no place to retreat if attacked!

Black's queen occupies the important "c" file, possessing an additional scope along the long diagonal, while the white queen is only defending the pawn and does not have an open file.

Black's rooks, indeed, haven't joined the action yet, but they are connected and nothing is going to prevent them to be placed on the central files in the next two moves. At the same time, one of the White's rooks is restricted by the bishop, while the other one, although occupying an open file, is in an unnatural position on the third rank.

White has particularly badly placed: a bishop which has no good perspectives (on "e3" it deprives the central pawn from the queen protection, while the natural square "g5" is unapproachable for it, since there could follow ♖:e4, ♖:e4, ♗:e4, ♗:e7, ♗:d3), as well as both knights: this one on "c3" because of the lack of any squares to retreat in the case of an eventual pawn push b5 – b4, and the other knight on "b3", which is weak because it can only go back where it originally came from, i.e. via "d4" or "d2" to "f3".

Now, evidently the movements of this knight were not necessary, as well as the untimely development of the rook and there arises a question- whether the formal gain of time didn't turn out to be in fact a loss of time.

I have to turn your attention to the white pawn on "e4". It is a strong pawn, because it is doubly protected, nevertheless it turns out to be a weakness, because it has been attacked twice and Black threatens to take it after the threat b5 – b4.

Can White protect it with $f2 - f3$? There could follow $b5 - b4$, $\text{♞c3} - d1$, $a6 - a5$ with the threats ♜a6 and $a4$, and White gets a cramped position. You don't have to forget the opening of the diagonal " $a7 - g1$ " for Black and the " $f4$ " square for the knight.

It is in fact this pawn which is essential for this position and determines the difference between the positions of Black and White.

Here we can see that the character of the situation requires from White to play defensively, because Black has the advantage.

First of all Black's advantage is defined by the threat to win White's central pawn on " $e4$ " by means of the move $b5 - b4$; still important is the unfavourable position of the white pieces, despite that White has no real weaknesses yet.

Now White is faced with the task to save his central pawn and further to develop his pieces improving the poor squares they are occupying presently. If White continues to stick to a passive defence, Black will have time enough to improve his position and to decisively outrun the opponent in development. We already saw what consequences could a move like $f2 - f3$ have. Even worst will be to watch what a move like $a2 - a3$ (defending from $b5 - b4$) could bring about, since in this way White must comply with the exchange of his central pawn for a black pawn on the side (after $a6 - a5$, ♞c3:b5 , $\text{♜c7} - b6$), not to talk about the weakness on " $c4$ " where the black knight can head proudly.

Now what grounds the White's plan should be based on? Evidently White has no other option for protection of the " $e4$ " pawn, besides pushing it forward. In this way the pawn avoids being attacked from two enemy pieces and it would not be easy for Black to concentrate on it- two new attacking pieces once again. The diagonal of the bishop on " $b7$ " is open however, so Black threatens the " $g2$ " pawn immediately,

increasing the pressure on it by means of ♖c6. If White decides to protect the central pawn with f2 -f4 -another diagonal is opened, i.e. a7 – g1, which allows Black to get a strong attack on the king-side and shatter the central pawn set-up of White with f7 – f6 and g7 – g5.

Therefore the problem of defence for the "e4" pawn is changing into a problem of defending the "g2" pawn.

To solve the new problem White should make a good use of a piece which presently is placed not so favourably – the rook on "d3". There is a well known common sense rule that if a piece is placed badly, before you retreat with it, you should have a look whether it can be used for some combination.

So, the rook on "d3" can protect the "g2" pawn after ♖g3. In this way, White is not only protecting the "g2" pawn, but simultaneously attacks the enemy "g7" pawn with the threat to develop the bishop with tempo: ♗h6 or even ♗g5 with the idea to exchange it. We can see now the interconnection of all the moves in a chess game: evidently when White played the rook to "d3" -he must have had in mind to put it on "g3" later.

Now, suppose White plays e4 – e5 and there follows ♟f6 – d5 and ♜d3 – g3. If Black, in his stead, defends against the threat ♗h6 and ♖g4, by means of g7 – g6, he is not able to prevent the white bishop to develop favourably to h6 or g5 and besides the white knight might sometime utilize the excellent "f6" square. Further White is going to employ with a tempo his second undeveloped rook, playing ♗h6 and after the retreat of the rook ♞c3:d5, ♞b7:d5 and ♞a1 – c1. In this way White's development will be favourably finished and by the way the same thing will be accomplished if Black moves the f8 rook immediately, instead of g7 – g6, to be able to defend afterwards with ♗f8.

Therefore, Black will be forced to play ♞d5:c3. In this way Black postpones the eventual threat to the "g7" pawn and White must capture back ♞g3:c3. The black queen now will

be able to occupy the "a8 – g2" diagonal in front of the bishop on "b7", while if Black does not exchange the knights, then White will exchange, and in this way the bishop should recapture, which will lead to its being in front of the black queen on the long diagonal.

The black queen falling under attack will have to abandon the "c" file and will move to the open "d" file, threatening to attack once again the pawns on "g2" and "e5" after ♖d5.

Lets make all these moves: ♜d5: c3, ♖g3:c3, ♗c7 – d7. Black's threats and the difficult problems for White remain just the same as before, i.e. the central pawn will not be under attack, but the white bishop will be undeveloped yet. Therefore it would be natural for White to play once again ♖c3 – g3 with the same as before threats for the "g7" pawn, besides now the white queen can attack it additionally after ♕g4, because the white queen is free from the protection on the "e5" pawn, since the pawn is not attacked anymore. This leads to the conclusion that Black will not be able to avoid the move g7 – g6, but it will not be so weak to play it now, since the white knight will be exchanged and the threat ♜e4 would not exist anymore.

So, Black will retreat with the rook: ♖f8 – d8 (threatening ♗d1+) and then, after ♙h6, g7 – g6.

White managed to achieve something: he developed his bishop, avoided the threat to the central pawn and forced the opponent to play g7 – g6.

The development of White is still not finished yet, since the second rook is out of play presently, and what is more important the white knight is misplaced. White's next task will be to bring it to a more favourable place.

White's first choice will be to manoeuvre it via the "d2" square. But then Black in his tum, since White will have no threats, will play ♖a8 – c8 threatening ♖c2 and after ♜f3 (♜e4, ♙:e4, ♗d1+, ♗e1, ♗c2) ♙:f3 ♖:f3 ♗d4, concentrating

all his pieces for the attack of the "e5" pawn in a moment, in which White will be unable to defend it with the bishop, and if White plays f2 – f4 the white bishop will be cut out of play entirely.

We have to remember now what we have been talking about the methods of maneuvering of misplaced pieces to better squares – it is recommended to do this threatening something -whenever possible. First of all White would like to put the knight on "c5" or "d4" and to be able to accomplish either- White should play bishop "e3" beforehand, but to do this White has to retreat with the bishop that has been developed before that.

Lets see now, whether it is so important for White to put the knight on each one of these squares?

Generally speaking, the knight on "c5" is very well placed, particularly in this position in which it will attack the strong bishop on "b7", as well as the pawn on "a6", and if White stabilizes it with b2 – b4- the knight will be a real problem for Black and mainly for the black bishop. If Black captures the knight, there will be left on the board bishops of opposite colours, which might lead to a draw, unless White tries to win this position having this strong pawn on "e5", which would allow to put the bishop on "d6" or "f6" and it will have no opponent, since its counterpart had been exchanged before.

The knight is going to be very well placed on "d4" as well, because it will threaten to go to "f3", or via c2 – e3 – g4 go to f6 or h6 with check.

Therefore Black should not allow the knight to improve its position so drastically and Black should play ♖d5. In this way Black might allow the white knight to go to "a5", a square that it was not able to hope for beforehand, since the black bishop on "b7" would go easily to "d5". Now, that move is unavailable for Black and the badly placed knight on b3 is going to be exchanged for the excellent bishop: ♖a8 – c8, ♘a5:b7,

♖d5:b7, but anyway Black will avoid a position with bishops of opposite colours. If we have a look now at this position:



Diagram 276

just eight moves after the previous one, we are going to see that White does not have one extra move as before. Black now has two extra moves and this is a consequence of the misplaced knight: it needed three moves to go to "b3" and afterwards two more moves to get exchanged for the

bishop on "b7", which had needed only one move to go there.

Black's advantage now is out of the question, but still White managed to do something: all White's pieces are developed, but still White might need some time to bring back into play the rook from "g3", since this position of the rook is senseless. There is no need for any protection of the "g2" pawn anymore and there are no scopes for a king-side attack.

We are going to quit now our discussion of this position, since my idea was to show you how you should reason, when you are developing a plan. There is no doubt about that, since the beginning of our analysis of this position, White should be able to envisage this position and make the important conclusion, whether it is dangerous or not. White's plan -to get rid of the misplaced pieces and pawns and annihilate the excellently placed enemy bishop and knight, has been completed successfully."

Further in his book Znosko-Borovsky makes the following comments: "... Naturally, it would be perfect if you can concentrate your pieces in the focus of the fight, but usually that is not so easy to accomplish. The chess pieces use to be developed at all parts of the board and usually you have

strong outposts at some part and weaknesses at another part, accordingly you have to attack and defend simultaneously. When you have a big advantage- you don't have to pay too much attention to the threats of the opponent at some parts of the board of a second-rate importance. If your advantage is very tiny, you should consider the threats of the opponent attentively. You should first of all understand, whether you have any advantage or not, and afterwards this will lead to the right decision how to act, i.e. if you have an advantage the majority of the pieces should be utilized in an active play, and what little is left for the defence and vice versa. To be able to yield the richest harvest from your active play, you have to use for the defence the least number of pieces, if at all. It is very often the case when only one minor piece will do the job, while the player might not be conscious of that, and he might defend with more pieces, and at the same time these pieces might not be so effective at that. Of course, the choice of these pieces is not a subject of the players will, but is caused by necessity and if you are unable to change this -you have to reconcile with it and take it for granted.

(One of the axioms of the Steinitz's theory is the principle of the most economical defence.)

Finally we are going to study the game **Pillsbury – Tarrasch**, the analysis of which has occupied a lot of space in the book.



Diagram 277

Znosko-Borovsky analysed this position as a multi-experienced microbiologist. He acts as if he were looking through a microscope at each square and piece in the kaleidoscope of the position. The author, after a thorough investigation, reaches the right

diagnose and derives from the information he has collected, the right plan for both sides, envisaging the slow at first, and intense later, conflict. I consider the analysis of this game to represent the most brilliant part of the book. It is an exemplary illustration of the powerful logic of one of the leading apostles of the theory of the First World Champion. We are talking about Zigbert Tarrasch, who is fighting against the gifted G. Pillsbury – on the saddle of his famous knight on “e5”.

“We can see now that, although the material is equal, White has thirteen useful moves and Black has twelve. White has a bit of a space advantage, some stronger presence in the centre, due to the pawns on “d4” and “f4”, as well as to the bishop on “g5” and the knight on “e5”, besides the bishop on “b1” controls the important central squares “e4” and “f5”.

If we start to evaluate the position of each piece separately- it will not be difficult to observe that almost all white pieces are placed superbly. The knight on “e5” is a really perfect piece, since it creates threats all over the board. The other knight on “c3” is well placed too, but its movements are a little bit restricted by the black “d5” pawn, which renders the “e4” square unavailable for White. Furthermore, Black’s queen-side pawns threaten to displace the knight from the “c3” square with a tempo by the way, of their route forward. The bishop on “g5” doesn’t have any particular perspectives, but still it pins the enemy knight, while the other bishop enjoys the whole long diagonal from b1 to h7.

White’s rooks are not to be envied in this position. There is not an open file, since the only one, the “c” file has been occupied by a strong enemy pawn. The “e” file is closed by the pawn on “e3” which will hardly be ever pushed forward, because the pawns on “d4” and “f4” might become very weak.

The worst thing about the white rooks is that it is very difficult to anticipate their further participation in the action, since White will hardly be able to open a file. In fact, the only

way to accomplish this will be to push forward the "g" pawn and of course White will need to step aside with the king to "h1". This however is a long way to go, since the black pawns on the king-side are well placed, there is not a single weakness, consequently White will manage to open files, if at all, at some rather late stage of the game.

The position of the black pieces is not so bad, but still it's a bit passive. The knight on "f6" is placed perfectly though, but it is pinned by the enemy bishop and secondly it can move only to "e4", where it will be exchanged for the passive white knight. White will have then a passed pawn on "d4", and the "e" file will be closed for Black, and the scope for the attack of the backward "e3" pawn will vanish.

The role of the knight on "f8" is evidently defensive, but it has some good possibilities to go to "e6" or "g6", and besides it paralyzes a little bit the effect of the actions of the strong enemy bishop on "b1".

Black's bishops are really well placed. Well, one of them on "b7" is restricted by the "d5" pawn, but still it protects this important pawn and indirectly controls the "e4" square, while the other one temporarily defends the knight on "f6", but it has a good open diagonal "f8 – b4".

Black rooks are really well placed. One of them attacks the "e3" pawn on the open "e" file, while the other one is behind the pawns on the queen-side enabling them to go forward easier.

This pawn situation on the board comprises the essential part of the Black's advantage, since the future movement of the pawns on the queen-side is really threatening. One of these pawns is already a passed pawn and although its further movement is not directed against the king, but still it is very dangerous, because White has nothing to put up against it, since White does not have enough pawns there after all.

On the contrary, White's extra pawn is the backward "e3" pawn and as we already mentioned, it can not go forward. It remains a juicy object for an attack on the "e" file and eventually even on the third rank as well.

Therefore, we can consider the position of both sides more or less equal: White's minor pieces are placed better and more aggressively, while Black's rooks and pawns are much better than their counterparts.

The character of further actions is clearly determined for both sides: White will strive for an attack at the enemy king, while Black will push forward his queen-side pawns with the idea to promote one of them into a queen with the additional idea to open the third rank for the attack of the backward "e3" pawn.

The tempo of future play will be determined by the approximate equality of the position, in which there are no weaknesses for both sides – therefore there is not any necessity for any slap-dash actions for both sides. The opponents should develop their future actions slowly, avoiding the creation of any weaknesses. Still the White position seems to be much more aggressive and this is because the White's piece position is more active, but even more so because the attack is aimed at the enemy king. Suppose for example -Black plays ♖e6; White has now an easy forced win with ♙:f6, ♙:f6, ♙:h7+, ♖:h7, ♜h5+, ♔g8, ♜:f7+ and ♜:b7.

Now we see that Black should be very careful about his king-side, because although he has no real weaknesses there, he has as many pieces for the defence there, as White has for the attack. It was enough for Black to touch one piece on the king-side and White prevailed in a flash. Therefore it becomes evident now that White should bring to the king-side at least one more piece to be able to overcome Black's defence there.

What piece? We will be able to give the proper answer to this question after we make the evaluation of the future Black's threat.

If Black simply starts to push forward his queen-side pawns, without any previous preparation and piece support, the best that he can hope for is to obtain a passed pawn on the sixth rank, which will become an isolated pawn there and will be easily apprehended by White, after being attacked by several pieces.

Therefore Black should prepare first the movement of his pawns and connect it with some other threats. We have been talking about one such threat, the attack against the "e3" pawn horizontally, on the third rank. Some other threats may be created against the white queen-side pawns, since they can not be moved forward safely, because Black will obtain then a protected passed pawn on the third rank, and besides that, after an eventual exchange White will have an isolated pawn on the third rank, which may be attacked and eventually captured by the opponent.

All Black's pieces are presently occupied with the defence of the king-side, so only the queen, the rook on "a8" and the bishop on "b7" can be of some help for the preparation of the future movement of the pawns on the queen-side. One of these pieces will be in fact hardly helpful at all, and that is the bishop on "b7", since it should protect the "d5" pawn.

What kind of pawn movements can be most dangerous for White?

Some important considerations should form the basis of this reasoning. First of all, the strongest black pawn on the queen-side is the "c4" pawn, therefore its movement to the third rank is either isolating it, or simply weakening it, not to talk about the eventuality of this pawn to entirely vanish from the board, leaving Black with two pawns on the side against the white "a2" pawn. If Black pushes forward the "b5" pawn to

the third rank, White will play simply a3 and Black will have no passed pawn any more. Additionally, Black will be able to push forward this pawn only if it is protected behind with the rook, because otherwise White will simply capture it and Black will lose all his advantage after having to take on "b3" with the "c4" pawn. That will open the "c" file for White, while Black's rooks will have no open files at all.

On the contrary, the future movement of the "a6" pawn threatens to open a file for the black rook for the attack of the "a2" pawn, and if White plays b3, Black will obtain an extremely strong passed "a" pawn.

Now, we saw what are Black's threats after all. We understand that they seem to be very distant in the aspect of time, and consist in fact- in the attack on the "a" file against the "a2" pawn, or the "b2" or "the b3" pawn. This all leads us to the conclusion that White can safely manoeuvre his pieces away from the queen-side, since this is not going to cause any catastrophe soon. Of course, if White's attack on the king-side fails, Black will evidently prevail on the queen-side.

Black has one more threat, which forces White to do something about it, and that is to play ♖e4, with the idea to play then -f6 winning a piece. If White exchanges first the bishops on "e7", Black is going to play ♜:e7 and White can not win the "e4" pawn, because after the total exchange on "e4", Black is going to win the knight on "e5" with the pawn move f7 – f6.

By the way, with the move ♖e4, Black will completely paralyze the bishop on b1, exchanging the other bishop on g5 in the process. The position of the knight in the centre will immediately bring Black the advantage, since Black will be able to displace the enemy knight on "e5" with the pawn move f7 – f6, and besides the knight on "e4" will be on an outpost on which it can not be displaced by a pawn. There it can

perfectly support the future movement forward of the pawns of the queen-side.

So, White will be forced to exchange this knight with the bishop on "b1", since this bishop will have no perspectives anymore, while the knight on "c3" can still remain an active piece in the future middle-game.

We came to the conclusion that White will be compelled to exchange both bishops, accordingly he should need to support the attack on the king-side with one more piece. Which one? There is no one left except a knight on "c3", because to bring the rook into action will be possible only after the pawn thrust of the "g2" pawn, but all this needs a lot of time and will be rather dangerous, because it will compromise the king-side at a time when the king-side of Black hasn't been weakened at all, yet.

The future movement of the knight on "c3" can constitute a real danger for Black, so he should do something about it.

Imagine, White makes two moves in a row -like ♖c3 – e2 – g3; now there is no doubt that the threats ♜f5 and ♜:e7+, or ♜:f6 and ♜h5 next, are all very serious. Of course, Black can defend from this with g7 – g6, but this creates a serious weakness on the king-side and enables White to push forward f4 – f5 with good chances for an attack.

In fact the best way for Black to parry the abovementioned threats is to play ♜e4, which leads to the exchange of several minor pieces.

Now we see that both sides at certain moment should clarify what consequences these exchanges are going to bring about.

So: 1. ♜e2 ♜e4 2. ♜:e7 ♞:e7 3. ♜:e4 de 4. ♞g3.



Diagram 278

What was achieved in this way by White? The black "c4" pawn became weak now, because its natural pawn protection was removed and it will be weak even in case Black pushes forward the "b" pawn. White should not care anymore about the weakness of the "e3" pawn, since it is blocked now by

the black pawn which closes the "e" file for the Black rook. Besides White can be now proud with his passed pawn on "d4", and although both bishops have been exchanged, the strong knight on "e5" still remains on the board and enables White to attack with his pawns on the king-side, and the position of the king on "h1", on the long diagonal of the bishop on "b7", is not dangerous at all, because the black pawn on "e4" protects the king perfectly.

This same pawn can later become a nice object for an attack by White. Black will hardly be able to support it with f7 – f5, because White will get an additional opportunity for an attack with g2 – g4, accordingly the "e4" pawn looks like doomed to remain isolated. The absence of the black knight on "f6" enables White to operate with the attacking opportunity f4 – f5 – f6.

What did Black obtain as a result of these exchanges?

First of all Black annihilated the dangerous attacking enemy bishops and then having got rid of the "d5" pawn, he might use this wonderful square for the bishop on "b7" to support the queen-side pawns. Accordingly the preparation of the queen-side pawn advance, which looked to be rather difficult is getting easier now -due to the exchanges.

Once again we witness an approximately equal position, in which the opponents have as before their chances on the different sides. We don't have to neglect the fact that, with the simplification of the position, Black's chances improve evidently, because White's hope is only connected with a successful king-side attack, while Black's strong queen-side pawns promise a favourable outcome.

What are the opportunities for White in this position? As I have already mentioned, that is to play f4 – f5 threatening f6, as well as to attack the "e4" pawn. White can attack this pawn with the queen, with both knights and the rook, looks like enough, doesn't it? Does White have the necessary time for that? White needs about seven moves, in order to realize his threats (f5, ♖h4, ♖f4, ♗f2, ♗g3 or ♗c3), while Black needs five moves (f6, ♗d5, ♖b7, ♖ae8), that means time is enough for the protection. Had that not been so, Black would have not been able to afford the exchange.

White has some additional threats after these piece manoeuvres. For example, after f5, threatening f6, Black has to play f7 – f6 to defend and White will answer ♗g4- with the idea ♗f6+ or ♗h6+, therefore Black will have to play ♗h8. If White plays f5 and Black plays f7 – f6, White can manoeuvre with the knight to f4 and even e6 then, besides the white pawn on f5 deprives the black knight on f8 from its natural squares. At the same time that pawn is a little bit defenseless and the White's attack with the "g2" pawn will not be so effective and the eventual threats, created in this way, look almost harmless.

We see now that the mutual advantages and disadvantages are somehow balanced. This is very peculiar and is a symptom that -when both sides play well, you can't obtain an advantage effortlessly, and you need a lot of time to get a really substantial advantage to be able to win the game.

You can come to a strange conclusion. What is the sense to attack and threaten something, if you can anticipate beforehand that the opponent will be capable of a successful defence?

We have already discussed the fact that if you don't have a plan and you don't create threats, the opponent in his stead will have his hands free for actions and will start threatening himself. You have to create threats to engage the enemy pieces in the process of defence and to restrict their freedom of action. Often you can place your pieces on the best squares, in the process of threatening something, which will enable you to realize your main idea. (In this game for White - it is to push forward the "g2" pawn to bring into action the rook - that paramount extra piece which is destined to decide the fate of the attack.) Additionally, attacking prevents the opponent to realize his threats (to push forwards the queen-side pawns). The opponent should be able to parry the threats in such a way that his pieces should not go to some pathetic ridiculous squares, since with keeping some relative freedom of action, these pieces can help the realization of some counter-threats defending at the same time.

What is the right order of moves for Black to make these series of forced moves? It is clear that he should first of all make moves threatening the opponent and making the position more flexible. For example:

4...f6 5.♘g4 ♘h8 6.f5 (with the idea ♘f4), **♙d7** (attacking the "f5" pawn), **7.♖f1 ♖d8** (Black has at his disposal a few extra moves, but still this looks like a waste of time), **8.♖f4 ♘d6 9.♘h4 ♖de8 10.♘c3 ♗d5 11.♘f2 ♙c6**. Both sides played a lot of more or less forced moves and we reach:



Diagram 279

If we try to evaluate this position, we are going to see that all Black's pieces are in fact defending, while White is attacking the "e4" pawn and threatens additionally to open the "g" file, after the pawn moves from g2 to g5. Yet, White hasn't managed to bring into the action any additional piece,

since the knight on "c3" and the rook on "c1" are still on the queen-side, and it is hard to see how they can be brought into action on the king-side to participate in a successful king-side attack.

If we try to evaluate this position even more deeply, we are going to be amazed by the fact that- against the twelve useful moves made by White, Black has eighteen moves – Black is ahead a whole lot of six moves! At the same time, in the aspect of space, Black is not deficient at all, because the pawns on the queen-side have occupied even more space than the white pawns on the king-side. We don't have to omit the fact that although Black's pieces are only defending for now, their position is almost ideal for the preparation of the successful queen-side pawn advance. Moreover, it is obvious that the white queen and one of the rooks are presently out of play and can take part in action only if White makes a breakthrough on the king-side.

All this leads to the conclusion that Black's position now is clearly superior.

What has happened that in the last eleven, seemingly excellent and correct, moves for both sides -White got his game on the downslope? Didn't it seem to us that White had better chances?

The right explanation for this is the fact that White had an attacking aggressive position, but only superficially, while Black's opportunities were somehow in a latent hidden form. White's threats were not substantial enough to engage Black's pieces in defence only. Well, Black hasn't organized any advance yet, and all that he is left with is- to create threats. Lets see what kind of threats Black has at his disposal. We don't have to forget though, that White has almost everything ready for the king-side breakthrough, and if White manages to bring just one more additional extra piece - the king-side attack may become overwhelming. Well, indeed Black's bishop is very useful for the defence, but we have already mentioned that, for the successful queen-side pawn advance, Black should need some piece preparation as well, since pawns only would not get the job done.

We have been treating this position for so long, because it is so typical and useful for an instruction. It is hardly possible to find any better to consequently evaluate a position, to follow a plan formation and its successful execution. I will venture a guess that had White anticipated the arising situation eight moves ago (and he surely did...), but evidently evaluated it wrong, although he had objective data; he might have tried to change the course of the game in some other direction. Now it becomes evident that it will be an useful habit from time to time- to test yourself in the evaluation of the position. Once you have chosen a plan, and its main features are clear to you, the plan is bound to be connected with an uncompromising logic and the rest is almost mechanical-move by move.

Anyway, presently Black seizes the initiative. Lets see what Black can do after the "mechanical" move **12. Bf1**, which follows White's previous idea.

The position of the knight on "c3" predestines the first move: **12...b4**. After the retreat **13. Qe2**, if Black starts to push

forward immediately his pawns - he might be endangered to lose all his advantage, for example: 13...c3 14.bc (if White plays 14.b3 the game will develop more or less like in the line that follows as a main one) 14...bc 15.♟d1 c2 16.♟c3 ♠c4 (with the idea to play ♠c1, winning the "c2" pawn next). 17.d5! ♠:d5 18.♠c1 capturing the "c2" pawn. We witnessed the exchange of the strong black active "c4" pawn for the presently passive white "d4" pawn. It is evident now that White needs one additional piece on the king-side -just like Black wouldn't mind having one extra on the queen-side. Black is in trouble however, since all his pieces should defend the king-side. The white knight on "c3" has retreated, so there is not an attack for the "e4" pawn (White can threaten it again of course on the next move with ♟g3). Therefore Black can afford to take away one piece from the defence of this particular pawn, but only temporarily, since he may need to defend it once again on the next move. It is best to do this of course, threatening something on the way.

The only piece capable to do the job is the queen, accordingly the move **13...♟a4** attacking not only the White "a2" pawn, but threatening to go to "c2", attacking the "b2" pawn, as well as going to "d3" – with the eye on the white pawn on "e3".

If White protects the "a2" pawn with ♟c1, that same move does not parry the second threat. Therefore, White should look for some other defence.

Now we have a perfect example of attack and defence combined: Black's queen quit the "c6" square, stopped defending not only the "e4" pawn, but the "f6" pawn as well. Consequently, White can attack this same pawn immediately and since the king-side attacks are always filled with danger, since the object of the attack is His Majesty the King, therefore Black can not afford to remain a passive spectator.

Indeed, if White plays **14. ♖g4**, that is going to bring about ♖:f6, gf, ♜:f6+, ♖g7, ♖g4, ♜d7, ♖f4 with a win. Black should defend the "f6" pawn immediately, and to avoid the retreat of the queen – the only move to do this is **14... ♖d7**.

Now we can see the first consequence of Black's attack: he should immediately find defensive moves that do not compromise the position too much. The knight on "f8" was protecting the "h7" and "g6" squares, while now it should take care of the "f6" pawn. You can see that the so called fist -fight is full of danger when attack is combined with defence!

The purpose of White was not only this, but he managed at the same time to defend his queen-side successfully. He maneuvered the knight away from "f2", that same square became available for the rook (**15. ♖f4 – f2**), and from this square it protected the second rank, defending from the penetration of the enemy queen to "c2". What about Black's queen capturing the "a2" pawn? Oh, no, not at all. The rook retreated from "f4" and presented this square for the knight, so ♜:a2 would be met by ♖f4 – threatening the bishop on "d5", as well as a knight check on "g6" winning the exchange. Black will have to play ♜f7, but then ♖g6+, ♜:g6, fg, h6, ♖:h6 or ♖:f6 winning easily.

Black had enough pieces on the king-side to defend, but to take only one piece away from this sector- enabled White to follow with brilliant sacrifices winning the game! Therefore, Black should make some defensive move first, before taking on "a2", to avoid the threat ♖f4 – g6+ and that is the move **15... ♖g8**. After this move ♖f4 is not dangerous at all, and White should do something about the defence of the queen-side. Neither a3, nor b3 can be of any help and ♖a1 looks really ridiculous, so White has only **16. ♖c1**. Now that is the piece to which White should delegate the all-important task of defending the queen-side, while all the rest should gather as vultures on the enemy king-side. Now, we can see that the

White's attack can become really serious and Black should be very careful with his defence and his counter-attack. Meanwhile the only piece, that can help the king-side attack and assure its success the knight, is presently paralyzed. White should therefore open a file and use the rook.

As we can see the final outcome of this game is near. The opportunities for both sides are getting narrow and the missing knight will fail to create any threats. White is left now with his main attacking line.

We have to additionally bring your attention to the last White manoeuvre, i.e. he defended the queen-side by means of a threat on the king-side, and that illustrates the ideal order of moves. First the attacking knight retreated, then the other knight made an attacking move, enabling the rook to move, then the rook made a move which seemed to be defensive, but liberated a square for the knight, where it headed with a decisive threat, and finally the knight went to another defensive square, wrapping up the defence altogether. If now Black continues the offence with **16...c4 – c3**, White plays **17.b2 – b3** and Black must retreat with the queen – **17...♙c6**. Why here? Because White threatens to play ♖g3 and afterwards ♕h6+, and penetrate the enemy position with ♗d6. Lets compare the new position with the previous one:



Diagram 280

We see now that the quantity of the moves made by Black remained the same – 18, on the contrary White made good use of the last several moves and now the quantity of their useful moves almost equals Black's – 16. Did Black's position get any worse? Not at all. Now, Black's advantage of

time transformed into an advantage of space, because Black managed to push forward the pawns on the queen-side and one of them reached the sixth rank. White didn't in fact obtain anything substantial.

Although Black increased his space advantage, his offence just like White's, reached almost a dead end. To be able to continue with the attack, Black should open a file on the queen-side, since only the rook can improve the attacking chances.

Which file? It is evident that only the "a" file will do. So, just like White should push the "g2" pawn, Black should push the "a" pawn. What should be the purpose of that? Black would like to open this file, occupy it with a rook, attack the "b3" pawn, which will be utterly defenseless, and then capture it, getting two connected passed pawns.

It is easy to calculate the number of moves that is going to require: two pawn moves (we don't calculate the exchange, since White is going to lose a move just the same), then two rook moves, so on his fifth move Black will be able to win a pawn. Naturally, White can also defend this pawn in five moves with the queen, but then White should give up the idea for an attack on the king-side altogether. Black, in his turn, can strengthen the attack on the queen-side with the rest of the pieces, i.e. the second rook, bring the knight and put the queen together with the bishop, but not on the diagonal "c6 – f3" like now, but on the other diagonal "f7 – b3" to attack the white pawn.

Therefore White should continue to attack, which is only possible with the pushing forward of the "g2" pawn. How many moves would this operation require? White should retreat with the knight from "g4" and that is two moves, then two moves with the "g2" pawn, and then on his fourth move White will threaten to exchange the pawn on "f6".

Accordingly, White manages to forestall Black's threats by one move, so to be able to determine, which one of the opponents should start these combinations, we have to weigh the quality of these threats, although it is quite clear that both sides are practically forced to act in such a way. There is no way to improve the defence and each tempo, lost in hesitation, allows the opponent to realize his threats first.

So: **18.h3 a5 19.♟h2 a4 20.g4** (it is clear that White can not take ba, since Black will effortlessly win the "a4" pawn with ♜:a4 and c2, or ♞a8, ♝:a4 and c2). Now Black is faced with a decisive question: if he wants to continue with his offence, he should play 20...ab, ab and ♞a8. If he wants to defend his king-side first temporarily, he should not exchange the pawns, since White will occupy the open file with ♞a2.

If Black decides to defend first, he should try to prevent the move g4 – g5 with h6. Now White is forced to play ♜g3, with the idea to play h4, but now Black can play ♟f8, and after h4 ♟h7. Now this knight defends not only the "f6" pawn, but the "g5" square as well. Nevertheless, if White plays g5, Black takes hg and after ♟g4 gh, ♜:h4 ♟g5 threatening ♟f3, and after ♞h2 Black can play ♞f8 allowing the bishop to defend the "g8" square. Accordingly, even if White sacrifices a pawn, he fails to increase the attack with the rook, and even if he does, the rook does not pose any substantial threats on the "h" file.

This is a logical conclusion – all Black's pieces are defending the king-side and he has no weaknesses there consequently – he should be able to cope up with the defence.

Can Black, in his turn continue with his offence? In this case the position may really become dangerous for him. If he exchanges immediately the pawns – **20...ab 21.ab ♞a8**,



Diagram 281

now White can push **22.g5**. Lets check how dangerous White's threats are. If Black exchanges the pawns fg, White takes ♖:g5, threatening f6 and if, after the exchange, Black plays ♜f6 to defend, White goes with the queen to g2 and plays ♔g4 afterwards, and Black is defenseless against f6 and

♕e5. If, after the exchange of the pawns, Black plays ♕f6, instead of ♜f6- White still plays ♔g4 and Black can not capture this knight, because of ♜:e7 (well, even if Black could do that, it would not help much, since White would have hg ♜f6, ♜f4 and g5), and White will threaten not only ♖g2 and ♕:f6+ or ♕h6+, but ♕e5 as well.

Therefore, Black can not take on g5 and has to allow White to take on f6 himself. In this case Black can continue his attack with **22...♖a3**.

If White simply takes on f6, that will not do anything, since Black can answer gf, as well as ♜:f6, ♜g3 h5- denying the white knight the "g4" square.

White should play **23.♔g4** first, sacrificing the "b3" pawn, threatening to exchange on "f6". We have come in fact to the decisive moment of the game, which should be calculated precisely by both opponents, and each one of them should have been able to anticipate perfectly what is going to follow.



Diagram 282

Now, White has nineteen moves and Black only seventeen, so Black has lost two moves somewhere. White pushed forward the pawns on the king-side, gained some space, in fact he equaled Black's queen-side space advantage. Well, now Black wins a pawn, so his advantage

was first in tempi, then transformed into a space advantage, and finally into a material advantage.

Yet, all this advantage amounts to, is just one pawn, indeed Black has now two passed pawns, but they are on the queen-side and can decide the outcome of the game, only if White's king-side attack fails. Besides, to be able to win this pawn - Black had to play with the rook and Black had to exchange the strong bishop for the passive white knight, and consequently Black's defence on the king-side was seriously undermined.

White can, in his turn, finally have one extra piece on the king-side and the main attacking plan looks like realized for the first time in the game. Now we come to the crucial question – was White right to rely that the king-side attack, with one extra piece, will bring a favourable outcome of the game.

After Black's move **23...♘:b3**, White does not capture this bishop with the knight yet, since Black's rook will take on b3 and will threaten to go to b2 attacking White's rook. White does not take gf, because this would allow Black to play gf, and then bring his rook into the action with ♖g7. White plays first **24.♗g2** and Black can not answer fg, since White will take ♙:g5, which will render Black helpless against the threat

f6, so Black should play **24... ♖h8**. Then: **25.gf gf** (if ♖:f6, then ♖g4 – e5 – g6+), and then **26.♖:b3** (taking away the defender of the crucial squares f7 and g8!), **26...♗:b3 27.♖h6** (threatening ♖g8#, and if ♖e8 ♖f7#, and if ♗c8 or ♗a8, then ♗g3 with a mate in two moves) **27...♖g7** (forced!) **28.♗:g7 ♖:g7**.

This position deserves a serious attention, since not a single black piece is defending the king-side! The rook is out of play, the queen is on the Black's sixth rank, the knight defends the f6 pawn as well as the "f8" square, but all the other squares and the open files are not defended by Black, while White has now the knight, the queen and can bring the rook as well, against Black's bare king! White had to make a lot of preparatory moves to be able to accomplish this!

Now White has to finish off the attack against the open king, taking advantage of the absence of the bishop, which defended before the white squares that were attacked by the White's knight.

For example: **29.♗g3+**, and the king can not retreat to h8, or to f8, since White plays ♗g8 and in the first case this will be a mate, while in the other case White is going to capture the rook on b3 (the wonderful bishop, that defended f7 and g8 is gone now!), so Black has to take the knight – **29...♖:h6**. Now, White can not play ♖f4, threatening ♖h4+, since now Black's rook enters the play giving checks on the first and the second rank, and the White's king can not avoid the checks, since when it goes to the "d" file- Black is going to play c2+ promoting the pawn into a queen!

Suddenly, in some of the lines- the advantages, that Black achieved on the queen-side, finally tell, as well as the material advantage.

White has another way to attack: he plays **30.♖h1** and Black has no defence against **31.♖g1** mating on the next move. For example: **30.♖h1 ♖f8 31.♖g1 ♗e8 32.♗f4+ ♖h5**

33.♖g4 or: 30.♖h1 ♘d5 31.♖g1 ♗f5 32.♗h4+ ♗h5 33.♗f4+ ♖g5
34.♗g5 fg 35.♗d6+ ♗h5 36.♗:d7 threatening mate on the next
move ♗:h7#.

Therefore, White's idea was correct after all: the open files and the attack, with one additional piece, really decides the outcome of the game. So, Black's plan was not correct, since Black did what he was aiming at, i.e. he won a pawn on the queen-side and obtained two connected passed pawns there.

We know now that Black had the opportunity not to hurry too much, but to improve the defence on the king-side first. The queen-side offensive could be successful only if Black used all his pieces to bring about, but the price he had to pay for that was rather high, accordingly he couldn't afford it.

The real problem was that if White didn't think beforehand to sacrifice a pawn on the side he was defending, and then the knight on the side he was attacking, White would have failed in his attack. So, couldn't Black in his turn try to use the same manoeuvre? Couldn't he take the "b3" pawn with the rook, instead with the bishop? Formally, this can be termed as a sacrifice, but in this particular position the bishop is stronger than the rook, since the bishop defends the "f7" and "g8" squares, and Black was losing, in the variations we have seen, due to the insufficient defence on the king-side. If Black had managed to defend from the White's combination, the two connected passed pawns, one of which had reached the sixth rank, would have brought an easy victory for Black, no matter whether the pawns would have been supported by the rook or by the bishop.

To properly assess this combination, we should mention that White can not defend against the advance of these pawns, since after Black's moves ♖:b3, ♘:b3, ♗:b3, if White plays ♖b1, Black responds with c2 immediately. In this way White's combination would fail and there would be no necessity for Black to retreat with the king to h8. Black can now oppose the

white rook with his rook on g7, and then retreat with the king to f8, enjoying the defensive capabilities of the bishop on b3 along the diagonal to the "g8" square. Besides, if White plays ♖g2 before the pawn exchange on f6, Black will have a choice between ♜f8 and ♜h8, but not fg, since after ♗:g5, ♜f8, f5 – f6 is decisive. If White exchanges the pawns "gf", Black must play gf (but not ♘:f6) and after ♘e5 (♙g2 ♙g7), ♘:e5, de and ♙g7+.

The conclusion is that if Black had preserved the bishop- he could have defended his king-side successfully. So, the exchange-sacrifice would have been absolutely correct.

All that makes this game an excellent example about the conflict between ideas, that are correct and executed in the right way, in which all this started from an approximately equal position. The changes that occurred were a perfect illustration of the transformation of one element into another, and all this showed the complexity of the formation and the execution of the plans we had discussed before.

We saw in this example the accumulation of different advantages in the stage of the formation of the plan and its successful execution. We saw how the concentration of the certain pieces on the different sides helped the attack and the defence, and we came to the conclusion that - the right order of actions was something the player should have been able to anticipate beforehand. At the same time we saw that the plan, without going astray, should always stick to the main idea, although it should improve the proper treatment of some parts of it, which were aimed at different purposes, but all these were in connection with the main plan, facilitating the main plan and creating difficulties for the opponent's plan at the same time. We found out that very often -one element transformed into another, which led often to modifications of different advantages.

This final conclusion must be mentioned and remembered particularly, since the advantage in one of the elements can

rarely increase indefinitely – there always comes a moment you can not gain anymore place or time. In cases like this, it is advisable to try to preserve the status quo, up to the appearance of some new possibilities. Most of the times however, the advantage that you have obtained tends to fly away, if you can't transform it into an advantage in some other element. This is very often playing a decisive role in the chess game. We saw in the previous example that Black lost the game due to the fact that he transformed the advantage of space and time into a material gain. On the contrary, if he had sacrificed the exchange, i.e. if the advantage of material had been transformed into an advantage of time, he could have won the game."

The next part of the book is devoted to better, worse and equal positions. In this part of the book Znosko-Borovsky ventures some observations which often seem to be rather abstract. Still, they impress us since they are profound and sometimes may even be new to us (do not forget the old proverb that, all that is new tends to be something that was familiar, but well forgotten).

First of all he talks about the advantage of material in its contemporary interpretation – the realization of material. Znosko-Borovsky writes:

"... Now we are going to deal with several cases, in which the material advantage is accompanied by some defects in the other elements, but despite that it is more substantial than them, and determines the general advantage on top of that. We are not going to deal extensively with cases like that, since they are relatively simple and if you are a good player you will not meet a lot of difficulties to press home your advantage of an extra pawn or a piece. The difficulties consist of making the right decision whether to simplify, attack, or manoeuvre etc., but you are going to make the right decision

after the proper evaluation of the position and we have been dealing with that extensively.

... Lets take for example this position:



Diagram 283

Blackburn – Lasker

Black is to move

Black has an extra pawn, but White has a compensation of three extra moves and a nice centre. Indeed, the "e4" pawn is a little bit weak and the knights are not placed too well, but the knight on e3 threatens to occupy an excellent square on

the next move, enabling the white rook to attack the enemy queen, which is not placed too well either, and can not safely retreat and take a better position. Besides, White threatens to organize a king-side attack in the next several moves, based on the good central pawns, the active rook position and the two knights that can be manoeuvred there soon.

What can Black offer against that? It is evident that he should rely mostly upon his extra pawn, since presently he has no other advantages. That means that Black should try to prevent, or slow down, the manoeuvres of the White's pieces to the king-side (particularly Black should retreat with a queen against the threats of the enemy rook). Afterwards, Black must try to simplify- to be able to neutralize White's advantage, and to try to win in the endgame. He must have in mind to try to reach a favourable endgame, since the extra pawn is doubled and Black can not not be totally sure, if he reaches a rook endgame that the extra pawn will be enough to win.

Black has to exploit the weakness of the "e4" pawn, because if the white pawn gets away from the "e" file, Black

will obtain a protected, passed extra pawn. Accordingly Black plays: **1...♖d4**, pinning both knights and avoiding the future threats of the rook on "f3". We have to mention that **1...♔d4** would only put the Black queen into a stalemate situation, in which White's move **♖g3** would be rather dangerous. The next **2.♗h1 ♜e6** is natural with the idea to exchange the bishops. If White tries to avoid this, he shall have to retreat with the bishop to e2 or f1, i.e. lose a move and switch off the bishop from the attack, and Black will take advantage of that to play **f7 – f5** immediately. If White exchanges the bishops (**♜:e6**), after **fe** Black will prevent the White knights to go to d5 or f5, since these squares will be controlled by the pawn, and besides the "f" file will be opened and that will make the "f4" pawn rather weak. White's attack will completely fail then, and Black will solidify the centre supporting his extra pawn. White must play now **3.♞c1 ♜:c4 4.♞:c4**. Now, Black is faced with the problem where to retreat the queen to? If it goes to f6, White will play **e5**, threatening **♔e4** or **f5**. So, Black must play **4...♗b2**, attacking the "a2" pawn. White will not like to give up a second pawn, since the attack is not so strong to compensate that, besides after **♗:a2** Black will threaten to go to d4 with the knight, attacking the rook on f3 and the pawn on b3, cutting off the rook on c4. Accordingly, White attacks the queen **5.♞c2 ♗f6**. There is no other move left. Now this move becomes possible, since Black's queen will meet e5 with **♗h4**, and f5 is not so dangerous anymore, because there is no rook on c4. In his turn Black threatens now to win the exchange with **♔d4**. White chooses another line of attack: **6.♔g4 ♗g6 7.♞g3**. If Black retreats now with the queen to e6, there would follow **f4 – f5 – f6**, and if the queen goes to h5, it will be lost immediately after **♔f6+**. So, the queen will have to remain there, but Black has to impede the future movement of the White "f" pawn. Therefore Black plays **7...f5**. White can

not capture this pawn, since Black will play ♖:f5, attacking the rook on g3, so White must play **8. ♖e5 ♗e6 9. ♖:c6 ♖:c6**.

Now Black's advantage is evident: the number of moves for both sides has been equaled completely, Black does not lack space either and the extra pawn is still present. Two minor pieces have been exchanged and White has no more attacking chances, besides White's central pawns are under attack; if White takes now ef, after ♗:f5 it is not easy to see how White is going to protect the "f4" pawn, exposed to an attack on the open file, where soon the second black rook is going to join the attack. Meanwhile, Black threatens to take fe, which will open the attack against the "f4" pawn. White is forced to push forward the attacked pawn: **10. e5 ♖b4** with the threats to win the "a2" pawn, attacking the rook on "c2", as well as ♖d5 and ♖d3. **11. ♗c4 de**, intending to meet ♗:c5 with ef, and the rook on g3 does not have a good square to retreat to. **12. ♗a1**, defending the "a2" pawn, attacking the "e5" pawn, and if it moves forward, threatening mate on g7. **12... ♗d7**. Black defends against the mating threat and attacks the knight on d2. **13. ♖f3 ef 14. ♖e5 ♗e7 15. ♗:f4 ♗e8 16. ♖c4 ♗e1+ 17. ♗f1 ♗:a1 18. ♗:a1 ♖:a2**.

So, Black has three extra pawns now, almost all pieces had been exchanged and White has no attacking chances left. The game will be won effortlessly by Black.

We have to find the lesson in this example. White lost some more pawns, since he wanted to compensate Black's material advantage with an advantage of time. If White loses this advantage, Black will simply remain with an extra pawn. Therefore Black's plan was to paralyze White's pieces and exchange them, neutralizing White's advantage of time. Black attacked the only weakness of White – the pawn on "e4", connecting this attack with the defence of his own queen. Black could calmly defend with an extra pawn, since every move was solidifying the position and the material advantage

was getting more important with every move. White couldn't calmly turn to defence, since that wouldn't have hampered the opponent to realize his material advantage. All this leads us to the conclusion that we had made when we treated the problem of the creation of plans: the realization of the material advantage should be the distant, the final aim, on the road to which there are some other elements as well. When you achieve these aims one by one, finally you come to the realization of your main goal.

If we try not to pay attention to Black's extra pawn, or if simply there is no extra pawn the position will be entirely different. This extra pawn did not take part in the game, but it determined the course of actions in the game, affecting the play of both opponents. We have been dealing only with the proper play of the side that had the advantage, and we didn't analyse the play of the other side. Let's take a look at another position similar to the previous one:

Marshall – Capablanca

White is to move



Diagram 284

Black has now an extra pawn, while White has an extra move, at a time when two of Black's pieces are almost out of action on the queen-side, and White has an attack against the almost defenseless king-side. The game continued: **1. ♖h5 g6**
2. d6.

Black can not capture this pawn, because the rook on c1 is hanging. Black can defend in another way – **2... ♗e6**, just because he has an extra pawn.

Imagine now Black didn't have an extra pawn. White could play then simply **♗g4: e6, fe, ♕f6+** compromising the enemy

pawns and keeping the strong passed pawn on d6. Therefore, the extra, although passive pawn, allows the side possessing it to contemplate some riskier play. The conclusion that the side having the material advantage should play much more carefully is in fact entirely wrong. There is a saying that the surprising events usually favour the weaker side, therefore the player often undertakes risky attacks with the hope to compensate his weaknesses with complicated combinations. We have to take into account that the weak side is practically forced into such a line of playing, since the peaceful developments will rarely be favourable for it, while the stronger side can play, having a freedom of choice. The latter is definitely to be preferred. White is a pawn down and therefore he chooses to attack: **3. ♖g5 ♘h8**. Black can not take the pawn once again, since after the exchange of the rooks and the move **♗h6**, Black loses the queen. **4. ♘f6 ♖:d6**
5. ♖:d6 ♗:d6.

Now we can see that Black has won a second pawn and after several moves White will be forced to give up his bishop. In fact all these developments are a consequence of the effect of the extra pawn, which allows the defending side to enjoy the freedom of action in difficult situations. You don't have to think however, that when you have a material advantage you have to keep it at any rate, trying to improve your position. Sometimes you have to give back the material, if it allows your attack to become energetic and effective. A lot of examples, suitable to illustrate this, can be found in a plenty of gambit lines. I have to mention to you that the material won, i.e. pawns or pieces, is something real, therefore you can give it up only when you exchange this advantage for something real in the other elements, or when you are pressed to do that by your opponent. This last case is either a proof that you have not played well enough, or it is a logical consequence of the fact that the compensation for the

material was so large that it was more than sufficient for the sacrifices. If you are not forced to give back pawns or pieces, and you do it without getting back anything really substantial for that, but just to free your game – this means that you have played not energetically enough, and your wish to win hasn't been strong enough. Chess is a game in which your efforts should never be in vain and you should not give up easily what you have acquired before."

Znosko-Borovsky finishes off the chapter "Material Advantage" with these comments.

In the next chapter "Advantage of Time", he shows the world-famous game Nimzovitch – Capablanca, Petersburg, 1914.



Diagram 285

After **1... *Qe6*** Znosko-Borovsky writes: "Now we have a very curious situation: Black attacks a pawn, which White can protect with the queen. White is in a hurry to do this, thinking that improves the position and gains time: **2. *Qd3?*** (the evaluation of the move and the italics next are put by the

author). *In this way White is not attacking the "c6" pawn anymore and the enemy queen is free now to attack, while it was pinned beforehand! You don't have, particularly if you are deficient in time, to free the opponent and to give up your own threats! It is clear that f2 – f3 was better, since White would have made this move sooner or later.*"

This was excellent. I advise the reader to think about it and remember this recommendation. The game Nimzovitch – Capablanca is a part of the classical chess legacy and has been quoted in a lot of chess books and magazines, but I

have only met the right evaluation of the position in the Znosko-Borovsky's book. Capablanca took advantage of the liberation of his queen from the defence of the "c6" pawn and won brilliantly after: 2...♖e6 3.f3 ♘d7 4.♙d2 ♘e5 5.♖e2 ♘c4 6.♖ab1 ♖a8 7.a4 ♘:d2 8.♖:d2 ♖c4 9.♖fd1 ♖eb8 10.♖e3 ♖b4 11.♖g5 ♙d4+ 12.♘h1 ♖ab8 13.♖:d4 ♖:d4 14.♖bd1 ♖c4 15.h4 ♖:b2 16.♖d2 ♖c5 17.♖e1 ♖h5 18.♖a1 ♖:h4+ 19.♘g1 ♖h5 20.a5 ♖a8 21.a6 ♖c5+ 22.♘h1 ♖c4 23.a7 ♖c5 24.e5 ♖:e5 25.♖a4 ♖h5+ 26.♘g1 ♖c5+ 27.♘h2 d5 28.♖h4 ♖:a7 29.♘d1.

If we return to the game Blackburn – Lasker we have to pay attention to the position arising after White's fourth move:



Diagram 286

Ragozin defence after 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♘c3 ♙b4 5.cd ed 6.♙g5 we came to the move 6...c6.



Diagram 287

In this position Black played 4...♖b2!, with a penetration of his queen in the enemy camp, attacking the "a2" pawn. He managed to deflect one of the enemy rooks and successfully neutralized the opponent's initiative. There are a lot of examples like this. Some time ago, when we studied the

There could follow: 7.e3 h6 8.♙h4 ♖a5 9.♙:f6 ♙:c3+ 10.bc ♖:c3+ 11.♘d2 gf.

Black has an extra pawn, but he is rather backward in development and his king-side has been compromised. 12.♖b1! This is an excellent move. White should prevent the

development of the enemy bishop to f5, 12...♖g8! Black should be able to cope up with the enemy threats with the existing forces. If Black retreats with a queen to defend -White will have a crushing initiative without looking back. I can give you the following line as an illustration: 12...♖a3? 13.♖f3 ♖e7 14.♗d3. We analysed after 12...♖g8 – 13.♖h5 ♗e6 14.♖:h6 ♗d7 and it seemed to us that Black's position was tenable. Suddenly, someone suggested the humble looking move 13.g3!. Unfortunately, it turned out that White could parry easily all the enemy threats, while the chronic weaknesses of Black's king-side were sure to cause Black a lot of trouble. We gave up the line altogether.

In the Gruenfeld defence 1.d4 ♗f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 d5 4.♗f4 ♗g7 5.e3 c5 6.dc ♖a5 7.♖b3 Black can try to prevent 8.♖b5+ with 7...♗d7!? It looked like a nice way to meet the whole line for White successfully. How can White play now? 8.♖:b7? will be met by 8...♗e4 with a decisive attack for Black. 8.cd wouldn't do also after 8...♗:d5, and 8.♗f3 can be met by 8...♗a6, as well as 8...♗c6. The law of limited opportunities helped us find the move 8.♗e5! White plays with the already developed forces. The threat is 9.♖:d7, or 9.cd. Black is reduced to 8...♗a6 9.cd ♗:c5 10.♖c4 ♗a6. (White threatened 11.b4).

What is White supposed to do now? Black intends to play 11...♖c8 and then castle and start some action with ♗b4. We couldn't find anything good for White for some time. We had finally to resort to Znosko-Borovsky's wisdom – to develop one more piece would not do the job. You have to play with the already developed forces and play actively at that!

same breakthrough. My position was bad and I decided to complicate even further with the piece- sacrifice. The white queen on a7 and the rook on b1 exert a strong pressure on the queen-side, so it is not easy for Black to do anything there. During the game I remembered Znosko-Borovsky and was not very fond of the White's queen, which had penetrated deeply into my position and had not any intentions to retreat at all.

Advantage in Time

Znosko-Borovsky's words:

"The material advantage can be lost only if the opponent attacks our pieces; the advantage of space is usually long-lasting, while the advantage in time is very unstable and can disappear in a flash. This is because when we develop our pieces on the perfect squares we can not intermittently gain time, since time is infinite, but not so in chess. Once we have gained a space advantage, we can manage to preserve the status quo, but when we have an advantage in time we are bound to lose it, if don't turn it into some other advantages. Therefore, when you have the advantage in time you have to ask yourselves a very important question (which, by the way, is not so important when you have advantages in another elements) and that is – what should I do- not to lose the advantage acquired? We have to be careful about the opponent's threats, but still the question remains: how to increase the advantage in time, or if it is impossible to increase, how to transform it into an advantage of another element, what advantage- and of which element?

The answer to this question is crucial for the chess game, since as we already know, the transformation from one

element into another is associated with danger on the chess board. Before we derive the conclusions how to play when we have an advantage in time, we have to turn our attention to an example which can be considered a classic one in the aspect of the advantage of time.

Tarrasch – Miezies

White is to move



Diagram 289

Indeed, this is a typical position; not only the number of the pieces is completely the same, but they are almost symmetrically placed, unless you don't consider that White overcame the opponent with three knight moves! That comprises the essential part of the White's advantage.

Having in mind what we have been discussing, White is faced with the dilemma, what to do – not to lose the given advantage of time? There are two way to lose the advantage of time: the opponent can attack quickly our developed pieces and force their retreat – accordingly time must be lost; or the opponent makes one after another important developing moves, and there are no such moves for the own side. In the given example there are not any immediate threats, since the pawn can not attack the knight on b5, it can go to d6 with check, winning a pawn; neither it can attack the knight on d4, because it will move to f5, threatening the g7 pawn, as well as a check on d6! White has plenty of opportunities for useful developing moves as well.

We have to be much more subtle than that in our investigation of the position.

The advantage of White comprises in the fact that the two knights have been developed to good squares, while one of the knights of the opponent is still on the initial square and the other one is rather misplaced. Imagine however that Black manages to play ♖f6 and then castle and we are going to see that White's advantage will almost disappear and then Black will displace White's attacking knights.

Accordingly, the first thing White should do is to prevent Black from finishing off the development, i.e. to develop the knight and castle. So, having acquired the advantage of time we should never lay back and relax and should strive for increasing it, pressing the opponent and creating threats.

White can easily prevent Black from castling short: 1.♖he1 and if ♗e7 the white king goes away and the knight will be pinned, and if ♖f6 the king moves with check and Black's king should go to f8 cutting off the Black rook for a long period of time.

What about Black castling long? The pawn on a7 will be hanging and the knight is going to capture it with check. Yes, but after ♖b8, the knight should go back to b5 and then Black will play c6 and afterwards the knight on d4 will be hanging and will be captured by the rook! Black's rook after 0-0-0 attacked one of the knights and up to now it was defended only by the other knight! Now we have seen what Black is threatening and if he accomplishes it, White is going to be deprived of all the advantage in time!

How should White parry this threat? First of all protect the knight on d4, or retreat it. That is to play after 1.♖he1 (otherwise Black is not going to castle long, but play instead ♖f6 and 0-0) 0-0-0 2.♖ad1 or 2.♗f5. After the first move Black is going to play simply c7 – c6 and after the knight moves back, ♖f6 comes next and Black will have no problems to finish his development. In the second case he is going to play

2...g7 – g6 and when the knight retreats Black would follow with c7 – c6 and then freely develop the ♖f6.

Therefore White should try to do something to refute Black's castling long and that is more important than to prevent castling short.

We already find out that if White doesn't play **1.♖he1**, there may follow ♖f6 and 0-0. Consequently, White must prevent 0-0-0, otherwise he loses altogether his advantage in time.

Now we have come to the decisive moment of the game. White has finished off the development, but Black threatens to equalize it in the next few moves. If White doesn't find anything decisive and he ought to be able to do it, that would mean that the knight manoeuvres had been premature and White is bound to lose time for the retreat of the knights.

There is a course of action that justifies the way of development and proves that White's plan has been as profound as far-sighted. That is to play **1.♖he1 0-0-0 2.♖:a7+ ♗b8 3.♖ac6+ bc 4.♖:c6+ ♗c8 5.♖:d8** and White remains with rook and two passed pawns against two knights. In this way White will have no advantage in time or space, but it will become a matter of material ratio. Therefore White transformed his advantage in time into an advantage in material. Imagine that Black's pawn was not on a7, but on b6 – the position would have been almost just the same, yet White's combination would not be correct. You have to pay attention how careful you should be to the smallest trifles in the features of the position."

Following Znosko-Borovsky's deep thoughts we can see the really narrow path White was supposed to follow to keep his initiative. White was constantly on the alert: what would be Black's next moves and threats? White was preventing these threats or decreasing their effectiveness by means of prophylactics – one of the prerogatives of A. Nimzovitch! I am not sure if we have to make any conclusions out of that, but I

still think that Nimzovitch, criticizing sometimes really sternly the partially inflexible Steinitz's theory, had surely studied the games of Tarrasch and had based his hyper-modern theory soundly. Well, I went a little bit too far. I would like to concentrate your attention that Znosko-Borovskii strongly recommended to observe the features of the position thoroughly (his last pawn transposition from a7 to b6).

Lets see a contemporary example on this theme – the impressive finish of the game **Yusupov – Timoshchenko**, Moscow 1982.



Diagram 290

If we calculate tempi -White is evidently behind his opponent, still it is perfectly evident that White has the initiative, because of the unsafe position of the enemy king. White must play energetically, because if Black manages to coordinate the rooks and find a safe haven for the king, White's

pawn weaknesses on the king-side will be troublesome for White. How should White develop his initiative?

1. ♖d5! 1. ♖fd1 looked tempting to engage the opponent in defence along the "d" file. Black can play however, 1... ♜ac8 2. ♗e4 ♜c6 3. ♜ac1 ♜hc8! and this tactical defence helps him to stay away from trouble. **1... ♜ad8 2. ♜ac1!** A. Yusupov expertly increases the pressure and does not allow the opponent to have his hands free. After 2. ♖fd1?! ♜c6! Black can sigh and relax. **2... ♗c7 3. ♗b6+ ♗e6 4. ♜fe1!** It looks like here 4. ♖fd1, threatening 5. ♜:d6+ and 6. ♗f4+ is very strong, but Black can meet it with 4...g5! **4... ♗f5 5. ♜ed1 ♗e6 6. ♜d5+ ♗f6 7. ♜cd1 ♗c7 8. ♗d7+ ♗e7 9. b4!** The white pieces managed to penetrate the enemy position and stay there. The

knight on d7 is endangering the Black monarch and to be able to increase his space advantage Yusupov resorts to his queen-side pawns. **9...f6 10.a4 g5**. G.Timoshchenko is preparing an outpost for his pieces on f4. **11.♠c1!** A very strong multipurpose move. White opens the "e" file for the rook, prepares to go with the bishop to a3 and simultaneously sets up a trap in which Black obligingly falls in. **11...♟f4?** Timoshchenko has been evidently tired from the defence of his difficult position, misses a fine tactical moment and loses a pawn. **11...♞hg8** was necessary.

12.♠:f4 ♠:f4?! 13.♟:f6! ♞dc8 14.♟h5! ♠c7 15.♞e1+ ♟f7 16.♞d7+ ♟g6 17.♟g7! ♠d8. The only defence. After **17...♞hf8 18.♞e6+ ♞f6** Black loses a piece after **19.♞:f6+ ♟:f6 20.♞:c7**.

18.♞:b7 ♠f6 19.♞e6 ♞hf8 20.♞:a8 ♞b8 21.♞:b8 ♞:b8 22.♟h5 ♟:h5 23.♞:f6 ♞:b4 24.a5 ♞b1+ 25.♟g2 ♞a1 26.a6 h6.



Diagram 291

The tactical operations are over and we can witness a prosaic rook endgame in which White has two extra pawns. Still the win in this position is far from being automatic. The doubled pawns on the "f" file do not allow the white king to march to the help of the passed pawn, so Yusupov enabled the

king to do the job by means of subtle manoeuvres, repeatedly making use of the zugzwang. **27.h3 ♞b1 28.♞d6 ♞a1 29.♞e6!** Zugzwang №.1. **29...♞a3**. Black is forced to let the enemy king to the first rank, since **29...♞b1** is bad after **30.f4! gf 31.♞e5!** and **32.♞a5**. **30.♟f1! ♞a2**. Snatching off the "f3" pawn loses after the rook manoeuvre **♞e6 – e3 – a3**.

31. ♖e1 ♜c2 32. ♜b6 ♜a2 33. ♜d6! Zugzwang №2. Black is obliged to enable the white king to occupy the second rank because of the manoeuvre 34. ♜d2 and 35. ♜a2. **33... ♜a1+ 34. ♖d2 ♜a2+ 35. ♖e3 ♜a3+ 36. ♖e4 ♜a2 37. ♖d5.** Now White can pay no attention to what is happening on the king-side, since the pawn on "a6" decides the outcome of the game. **37... ♜:f2 38. ♖c6 ♜:f3 39. a7 ♜f8 40. ♖b7 ♜f7+ 41. ♖a6 ♜f8 42. ♜c6 ♜h8 43. ♖b7 ♖h4 44. a8♙** Black resigned

Advantage in Space

"The main problem facing the player who has an advantage of some sort is always the same: first, not to lose this advantage, and then to enlarge it, so that it can assure the win. The difference between the ways to achieve this lies in the properties of the elements, the advantage consists of.

We saw that it was rather easy to lose the advantage of time, therefore the player who had that advantage should be very careful to avoid this. At the same time the advantage in time can not be preserved for a long period of the game, neither it can be enlarged so much, so it should be transformed into an advantage of another element. Both things are realized with the help of constant direct threats, which postpone the development of the opponent and permit the advantage to be increased.

The object of the play with a space advantage is entirely different. Once the opponent is cramped in the movement of his pieces, you have to not only threaten his pieces and the few squares left for them, but try as well to deprive him of these squares he can put his pieces on. It is much more difficult to lose the advantage of space, than the advantage of time, and to be able to avoid this it is usually enough not to

retreat with the pieces that are placed on outposts and important squares, but to support them there.

When you have the advantage in space you can afford to lose a lot of moves without threatening anything and even without developing your pieces to new important squares; the opponent will hardly be able to make use of this, since he has been deprived of enough squares. Accordingly, to increase your space advantage it is enough to slowly reduce the space of the opponent and making direct threats is not so necessary. The space advantage can be increased almost infinitely, in fact you don't have to worry about its transformation into another element, since often this happens automatically. When the opponent has no more squares to put his pieces on, and fails to find a way to free himself -he usually sacrifices something, a piece etc.

This particular moment can sometimes present serious dangers, since after the sacrifice the opponent's pieces are usually in the open and that can lead to a breakthrough, which might bring the doom for the side that had the space advantage.

That means that when you have the advantage of time, the dangerous moment is when you transform it into an advantage of another element, while when you have the advantage in space the danger comes when the opponent liberates himself with the help of material concessions."

The contemporary development of chess confirmed entirely the profound comments of Znosko-Borovsky, made more than seventy years ago. Still, it is even harder to give an useful advice how to play positions in which you lack space. A. Nimzovitch wrote that you have to seek liberation from cramped positions gradually. In his book "Fifty of My Best Games" B. Larsen commented his game with A. Nilsen, as Black in Esberg, 1953 after the moves:

1. $\text{d}f3$ $\text{d}f6$ 2. $\text{c}4$ $\text{c}5$ 3. $\text{d}4$ $\text{c}d$ 4. $\text{d}:\text{d}4$ $\text{d}c6$ 5. $\text{d}c3$ $\text{d}6$ 6. $\text{g}3$ $\text{g}6$
 7. $\text{d}g2$ $\text{d}d7$ 8. $\text{d}c2$ $\text{d}g7$ 9. $\text{b}3$ 0-0 10. $\text{d}b2$ $\text{a}6$ 11. 0-0 $\text{d}b8$



Diagram 292

in the following way: "Black is trying to prepare $\text{b}7 - \text{b}5$. This is a wonderful plan, but after my next move it was worth for my opponent to have remembered Nimzovitch's advice that you seek liberation, when you lack space ,gradually.

In these years I was studying Nimzovitch's legacy, while the other half of my efforts was devoted to the opening theory."
 12. $\text{d}c1$ $\text{b}5?$ The game didn't last very long now. 13. $\text{d}d5!$
 $\text{d}:\text{d}5?$ (13... $\text{d}e8!$) 14. $\text{d}:\text{g}7$ $\text{d}:\text{g}7$ 15. $\text{c}d$ $\text{d}e5$ 16. $\text{h}3$ $\text{d}b6$
 17. $\text{d}d4!$ $\text{f}6$ 18. $\text{d}:\text{b}6$ $\text{d}:\text{b}6$ 19. $\text{d}d4$ $\text{g}5$ 20. $\text{d}c7$ $\text{d}d8$ 21. $\text{d}h2$ $\text{h}6$
 22. $\text{d}e4$ $\text{d}f8$ 23. $\text{f}4$ $\text{d}f7$ 24. $\text{d}f3!$ $\text{d}b8$ 25. $\text{d}e6+$ $\text{d}:\text{e}6$ 26. $\text{d}e$
 $\text{d}h8$ 27. $\text{f}5$ $\text{b}4$ 28. $\text{d}b7$ $\text{a}5$ 29. $\text{e}4$ Black resigned.

Znosko-Borovsky's advices on this theme sound as usual rather abstract, but they are interesting and substantial-particularly when they are supported by examples, one of which I am going to quote:

"As we know the lack of space leads to the lack of good squares for the pieces, to a discoordination and the impossibility to have any initiative or threats. This allows the opponent to develop his game at ease, to place his pieces on the best squares and to narrow the space of the opponents position.

It is very difficult to defend positions like that, since you can not even think about any activity, so the best that you can do is to understand what is the weakest point of your position, and then what is the main threat of the opponent. You have to make a concrete pinpoint conclusion about this, and not

something abstract- and then to find the way to prevent the execution of this threat and look for a way to liquidate your weakness. Usually you combine those two tasks, but still you have to know about your weaknesses and the plans of your opponent- to avoid being confronted with such circumstances again. Now comes the question- how to get rid of your weakness and prevent it from getting enlarged? Lets see the following position:

Tarrasch – Duras

White to move



Diagram 293

This position is very interesting for us, since the game is in its opening stage, in which a lot of the future possibilities are hard to envisage and you can not even talk about the end of the game. It is not so difficult, however to see that the White's position is clearly worse and that is due to

the position of the bishop on d2, which has no good squares for development and hampers the rook. The bishop can not go to c3, White can not open the diagonal "c1 – h6", since after e3 – e4 Black will play ♞d7 – e5 . So, the bishop is left with the e1 square and then White should push forward the pawn on f2 to be able to put the bishop to f2 or g3. If White wants to do all this- he should retreat with the queen first in a way to enable it to protect the "b2 " pawn, but carefully, since Black's knight can attack this pawn in two moves: ♞d7 – e5 – c4 ; accordingly, White should be careful with the "e3" pawn in this case, before pushing forward the "f2" pawn. You can see that the problem of development of the bishop on d2 is very complex and the knight on b3 occupies a square, which is far

from perfect, but still this defect of the position is of absolutely second rate importance, relative to the first defect.

What is Black's main threat? We already mentioned it – the knight manoeuvre $\text{♞d7} - \text{e5} - \text{c4}$ attacking simultaneously the pawns on b2 and e3, as well as the bishop on d2 and the queen.

White should try to defend from this threat and it should be a combined one, but at first White should gain some time. Black threatens to attack the now defenceless b2 pawn, so White should retreat with the knight on c3 and enable the bishop to protect it from c3. If Black plays ♞e5 White is going to answer with ♞g3 and if ♞c4 , ♝c3 , threatening with something like an attack on the king-side (♝a5 is also a threat). So, it is Black who should be careful not to allow the white bishop to go to c3, so Black should play $\text{b5} - \text{b4}$, in this way White gained that move he needed to accomplish his manoeuvres. Black is not threatening anything with this move, so White can defend safely the "e3" pawn and then continue with the aforementioned manoeuvre of the bishop via e1:

1. ♞e2 b4 2. ♞d4 ♞e5 3. ♞e2 and this not only defends the pawn on b2, but denies the square c4 for the black knight, since the b5 pawn is gone. Black is forced now to bring new pieces to be able to prepare the manoeuvre of the knight to c4, which still constitutes Black's main threat. **3... ♞e4 4. ♝e1 ♞c8 5. ♝ac1 ♞d6 6. ♞d2 .**

We can see the desperate measures of White to disallow the penetration of the black knight to the "c4" square. **6... ♝f6** with a nice position on the long important diagonal, attacking the "b2" pawn.

7.f3. Finally this move has become possible, opening a new diagonal for the bishop.

Now the white knight on d4 is the key piece in White's position since it closes the diagonals of the bishop and the queen, which can not retreat. Therefore – **7... ♞c6 8. ♞c6**

8:c6 9.g:c6 10.f:b3. White is threatening to go with the other knight to d4 and Black parries this threat with a move which simultaneously attacks the "e3" pawn.

10...g:b6 11.f2. White has accomplished his main task, the bishop has been developed well and the position have been equalled. Black can not realize his main threat. Now the game goes into an equal endgame: **11...g:b5 12.g:b5 13.f:d2.**

You can hardly find a better example of paralysing the threats of the opponent and liquidating your own weaknesses. Moreover it is much more typical, because White managed to equalize the game playing passively, without even a hint of an activity or an attack."

Further Znosko-Borovsky makes some interesting comments about worse positions in broader aspect: "As usual, the formation of the defensive plan should be based upon the proper assesment of the position. When you have made it and you have seen the defects of your position it would be very useful to ask yourself the following question: The advantage which belongs to the opponent, is it enough to assure the win, or it should be substantially increased if the opponent is to win the game? The right answer to this question is going to facilitate our further play in this game, because if the advantage is insufficient, the defensive task is easier: it will be enough to watch not to worsen your position more. On the contrary, if the advantage of the opponent is great, so it can cause our losing the game, you have to try to find much more complex plans and manoeuvres to avoid losing.

... When we say that the will of the weaker side is subjected to that one of the opponent, this does not necessarily mean that the moves of the weaker side are forced, so he has no choice. On the contrary, in the examples we have been treating before, we saw that the defending side

could choose between one move or another, as well as between one defensive system or another. If the will of the weaker side gets paralysed completely, the only thing he will be capable of doing is to subject to what the opponent requires of him, so his position will be lost and he will not have any chances, until he finds a way to liberate himself from the power of the opponents will and acquire the freedom of choice. We have already ascertained that when you have to play forced moves, this implies that your position is critical. Therefore, it can be assumed that the main task of the defending side is to avoid the necessity to make forced "only" moves. The method to achieve this depends of course on the features of the position and particularly on what elements the opponent's advantage consists of.

If the advantage of the opponent is in space and he tries to slowly squeeze our position and to pin out pieces and paralyse our moves without any direct threats, it would be very advisable to make some diversion on the side, opposite to the side on which he is attacking us, not to allow him the freedom of action. On the contrary, if he has the advantage in time and he creates direct threats to prevent us from developing our pieces, we have to defend in such a way not to allow him to create additional threats and not to take away the little threats we have, keeping some of his pieces occupied.

The stage of defence is the most important one, in which we have to find a long and extensive defensive plan and not to comply with making one defensive move after another and to parry his different threats neglecting his main attacking plan. Since we have already determined that the actions of the weaker side are more or less forced, it is very important to understand and clarify what his real threats are.

... In the upper passages we have been talking about whether the advantage of the opponent is enough to win the

game or not. It is important to clarify in which stage of the game can this advantage cause our defences to crumble, the middlegame or the endgame and accordingly choose the type of play that is going to help us defend successfully. Therefore, you have to understand perfectly sometimes what kind of endgame you can defend comfortably and successfully and depending on that to choose one or another defect of your position. It happens very often that you can't avoid the loss of a pawn or the exchange, so you have to answer this question and to try to look for the easier to defend endgame, and eventually choose if you have to give up a pawn, which one and when to give it and how.

... Now we are faced with the following problems: when the opponent has advantages in several elements- how to prevent the defects of your position to enlarge so much that the loss might become unavoidable – how to get rid of these defects, how to defend against different plans and threats of the opponent, and how to cope up with them. Finally, what kind of plan we can formulate to try to play actively, or if you have to go into an endgame what should that endgame look like. If you have to keep playing in certain position as it is, you have to try to make the task of the opponent as difficult as possible, or as the saying goes: the opponent ought to be able to prove that he is capable of winning.

So, we can have the following cases:

1. Passive defence, of course not, always deprived of any personal initiative, is suitable only if the position is really bad.
2. Counter- attack happens to be the option often in a position in which we don't have enough forces.
3. Manoeuvring type of playing, which is advisable when the difference in the positional aspects is not so substantial."

What is the importance of Steinitz's theory nowadays? If we make a comparison with the theoretical mechanics then the contemporary chess corresponds to the role of the

dynamics, while the chess of Steinitz's era should be connected with the statics. You can not understand at all cinematic and dynamics if you don't know the laws of statics.

What are the drawbacks of the theory of Steinitz? First of all he is very narrow-minded in the evaluation of the positions. There are a lot, a really great number of cases, in which the methods of the positional evaluation and the formation of the plan used at the times of Steinitz will be appropriate. Chess, however, is one of the fields of human activity in which the exceptions of the rules comprise a much larger part than in the other human activities. Therefore, most of the positions should be evaluated much more concretely. Znosko-Borovsky mentions at some place the necessity of the concrete approach in the evaluation of the position, but this is limited only to: "... So, sometimes our feeling tells us that there remain some features of the position we have been unable to grasp, but this does not mean that these features are nonexistent. They haven't appeared on the surface yet, but to be able to locate them and understand them we have to use much more flexible and profound methods than the formal criteria we have been using up to now. " Unfortunately, we haven't seen these methods in his work. I would like to illustrate my thoughts, so I'll have to take you back in time, i.e. in 1955.

It is my opinion that one of the best Soviet chess books after the War was I. Lipnitsky's "Some Problems of the Contemporary Opening Theory". Unfortunately, this book was published only in 15, 000 issues and remained a bibliographical rarity. In this book the author tried to come to the essence of the concrete approach of the positional evaluation and the analytical method of the studying of chess. Here is a small excerpt from Lipnitsky's book: "In every position there operates a complex of objectively existing principles, features, conditions and laws. Most of them,

however, haven't been investigated thoroughly, or even formulated yet. It is not quite possible to make a completely right evaluation of the position, if your opinion is based only upon the established popular beliefs and truths.

If in a certain position the most important, the definitive features are a subject to the established and popular laws, then you can make the right evaluation of this position well, being based on them. But there are a lot of positions in which the essence is determined by some features and laws that objectively exist, but we haven't formulated or even grasped them at all.

What should we do to be able to evaluate such a position? The existing armour of positional evaluation wouldn't do the job. We have nothing else up our sleeves. We have to rely on the world famous reasoning that the truth is always concrete, while if we use the opposite connection- the concrete approach can be a reflection of some particular truth and would allow to replace the absence of a certain chess rule, or a law. Therefore it is entirely wrong to say that the concrete creative approach to the position diminishes the importance of the chess rules, or is contrary to them.

The essence of the matter is that *in each particular position the denial of some laws, (or features of the position) can take part only if some other are established and confirmed.*

Therefore the generalization and the concrete approach in the process of chess fight and analysis are fruitfully cooperating. You have to generalize in chess creatively and to strive always to be concrete."

Lipnitsky's thoughts are lavishly illustrated by examples. Here is one of them:



Diagram 294

White is to move.

If White tries to play according to the well-known rules of playing in the opening, i.e. develop his pieces and castle: in the scheme: e2 – e3, ♖d3, 0-0, such type of playing will lead White nowhere. Black will play ♗a4, develop the bishop to a6, the knight to a5, consequently

win the pawn on c4 and after that the game itself. Lipnitsky mentions the interesting opportunity for White to suddenly change the whole course of action with the move 11.g4!!.. Now, after 11...♗a6?, there may follow 12.gf ef 13.♗e3+! , and if 11...fg – 12.♗g2 ♖c6 13.d5. It becomes clear now that Black has no time to do anything about the “c4” pawn. Maybe the best line for Black will be – 11...cd 12.cd ♗:d2+ 13.♗:d2 fg 14.♗g1 h5 15.h3! gh 16.♗:h3 with more than a sufficient compensation for the pawn for White. Therefore, the rules: develop your pieces in the opening as quickly as possible and then castle, don't start attacks that are not well prepared, don't weaken your position on the side etc., will be in this position of a second-rate importance. The most important feature of the position is that almost all Black's pieces are concentrated on the queen-side, accordingly White tries to start actions on the other side with a clear superiority of forces. Therefore, it looks like as if the most important rule in this position for White should be something like: attack your opponent where his position is most vulnerable. This is essential for the position and for the right plan for White, and all the abovementioned rules are negligible. Yet, if White didn't have an object for an attack, had the Black “f5” pawn been on f7, White would have to look for another way out of

his predicament. In this case we somehow managed to define the main feature of the position using plain words, but nowadays that is not always possible, although chess laws affect even the sharpest and complex situations.

Lets go back to our study of Znosko-Borovsky's work and its qualification by A. Alekhine: "... He was about to finish the magnificent, as a concept, book "Middle Game in Chess". I am saying, as a concept, since his method of development of the theme and some of his conclusions are a little bit different with my beliefs and opinions. The fact itself that the author tries to establish *the necessity of the analytical approach in the structure of the chess fight to be given a place of a second-rate importance, while considering really important some generalizing laws is interesting. These laws were the fundament of the semi-scholastic "science" and the same approach to chess is an idea which constitutes an asset to the treasury of the chess game*".

A. Alekhine was really a great player. He was able to plan his actions perfectly relying on a very precise evaluation of the position. He could find better than anybody else some hidden concrete resources in the position which enabled him to play creatively and very effectively.

Alekhine – Rubinstein

The Hague 1921

**1.d4 d5 2.♘f3 e6 3.c4 a6 4.c5 ♘c6 5.♙f4 ♘ge7 6.♘c3
♘g6 7.♙e3! b6 8.cb cb 9.h4! ♙d6 10.h5 ♘e7 11.h6 g6
12.♙g5 0-0 13.♙f6!**



Diagram 295

A. Alekhine comments on this position: "This is an extremely strange position after thirteen moves in a Queen's Gambit! White has made in the first thirteen moves- three moves with the "c" pawn, three moves with the "h" pawn and four moves with the bishop and after that White has, if not winning, a

position with a really great advantage.

In connection with the original approach to the opening of this game, a lot was said about the "hyper-modern" technique and the "neo-romantic" school etc. In reality everything was much simpler. Black played in the opening several really poor moves. (3...a6, 5...e7, 6...g6), which might give Black a decent position had the opponent reacted in a trite way, for example: 7.e3 instead of 7.e3, or 9.g3 instead of 9.h4. I didn't intend to impress anybody with originality when I pushed forward my "h" pawn, all I wanted to was to prevent Black to get some advantage in the centre. As a rule, this ultra-original way of playing in the opening does not suit neither my temper, nor my style."

I think that it is possible to evaluate the position on the diagram correctly and to plan the following actions of White, if you are based on the theory of Steinitz. Well, I think that if you stick to this theory you would hardly ever find in the same position moves like 7.e3! and 7.h4!.

Alekhine and Znosko-Borovsky both defected from Russia and from what history tells us must have been in good relations, respecting each other warmly. Evidently this should tell us why Alekhine was so delicate "...are a little bit different than my views". Alekhine could hardly ever agree that the

analytical approach might be given a place of a second-rate importance, since most often this approach is quite enough to determine the essence of the position.

What are the main features of the analytical approach? Lipnitsky suggests the following scheme. Let's suppose that we are faced with some rather unclear position and we would like to find out which side this position is favourable for. We clarify which side is to move and try to find the best moves for both sides. We don't have to try to analyse it exhaustively "until mate". We have only to try to reach a certain position, which can easily be subjected to a correct evaluation with our knowledge, based on the laws and principles and the positional habits we have already acquired. Lipnitsky classifies positions like this as *clarified*. For example:

**Averbach – Botvinnik
Moscow 1955**



Diagram 296



Diagram 297

Szabo – Barcza
Stockholm 1952



Diagram 298

Alekhine – Zaemisch
Baden-Baden 1925



Diagram 299

In the first case we don't have to calculate any variations, or to be careful about the features of the position. Black's advantage is so evident that it is out of the question. In the second and the third example, White is clearly better, while in the fourth – there is a completely equal position on the board. When the chess player becomes stronger and more experienced, the number of the positions that he can term clarified increases. It is quite evident that for the aspiring chess player a lot of positions will seem unclear, while for the grandmaster there will be easily clarified. A lot of positions however are impossible to evaluate correctly using only the method of "optical" evaluation and Lipnitzky suggests such positions to be called *critical*. Accordingly, one of the objects of the chess analyses must be to make a transition from a *critical* position into a *clarified* one. I would like to offer the reader two examples of the analytical approach to the position, from the Lipnitzky's book, commented by the author:

"I will turn the attention of the reader to the analysis of a particularly interesting position from the game **Eliskazes – Averbach**, Stockholm 1952.



Diagram 300

13... ♗f6 – f5 was followed by 14.d5! Let us try to evaluate this critical position. We have to start with a “rough” evaluation. The exposed position of the black queen is rather unattractive here: the queen deprives the ‘f’ pawn from the opportunity to be pushed forward, and besides the queen

has been cut off from the queen-side which might soon be the area of important events.

White can create some threats to capture this queen, particularly if we have in mind that ♗d7 denies the queen the road back to safety, and the weakness of the “f6” square, when the white knight is on the “e4”, is quite real.

Therefore, the queen on “f5” seems to be like someone who has stepped on a pile of powder and must be constantly on the alert against someone who may bring a box of matches around. Meanwhile, Black has no advantages to compensate the unfavourable position of the queen, accordingly the conclusion is that the last Black’s move is bad and now the whole position has become dubious.

Lets now turn to the more difficult part – the concrete approach to the position. The attacking “e4” knight is protecting the white queen, which in its turn can be attacked and has only one square to retreat to. Afterwards Black can force his queen-side offence.

Is this a good enough compensation? Averbach, playing 13... ♗f5 must have thought so, for sure. Therefore, lets try to find some concrete lines in this critical position (we are going to classify it as number one. So, 14... ♗b4 15. ♗b1 b5 16. ♗b3 a5.



Diagram 301

Now we can see the idea behind Black's manoeuvres. He intends to displace the white bishop from b3 in order to win the central "d5" pawn and liberate his queen at that. For example, 17.0-0 a4 18.♘d1 ♘:d5 and 19.♗g4 is impossible because after 19...♙:g4 the "f6" square is protected by the black

knight.

Averbach must surely have had in mind this position, playing 13...♙f5. We are going to call this position "critical position № 2". This position arises by force after the critical position No. 1, therefore its perfect concrete evaluation is extremely important for us. Naturally we have to have a look what happened in the game. There followed **17. 0-0 a4 18.♗:b4 ab 19.♗:d6 cd 20.f3 g5 21.ab** and White remained with an extra pawn and excellent chances to win the game. If all these moves were forced, we could say that the move 13...♙f5 was bad, since it led Black to a very difficult position by force. But were they really forced? Why didn't Black play 18...♗:b4?



Diagram 302

It turned out that Averbach was convinced during the game that after 19.♗d1! White would have a winning position.

Indeed, in this critical position №3, which evidently had been calculated by both opponents, White had some serious threats like g2 – g4 (after 19...♙g7) and

$\Delta g4$ (after $19... \Delta e8$) winning the queen. Later, however when Averbach analysed this position, he found a sufficient defence for Black with $19... h5!$ with lines like: $20. h3 \Delta e8!$ $21. g4 \text{ ♖}c8$ and $22. gh$ is impossible because of $22... \text{♗}:h3$; or $20. g4 hg$ $21. h3 gh$ $22. \text{♕}h2 \text{♕}g7$ $23. \text{♖}g1$ and after $\Delta g4$ - White can indeed capture the enemy queen, but Black gets more than sufficient compensation for it. These lines after $19. \Delta d1!$ were quoted by master Baranov in the book "The Interzonal Tournament in Stockholm, 1952." And since the move $19. \Delta c2$ (instead of $19. \Delta d1$) does not give White any advantage, because of $19... \Delta e8!$, accordingly $18... \Delta :b4!$ allows Black to equalize.

Can we now say that the move $13... \text{♗}f5$ is bearable and Black's position has not been put by it on the verge of collapse. To be able to answer properly this question we have to clarify whether *white couldn't play better*. Lets turn our attention the critical position № 2.



Diagram 303

We suggest for White, instead of $17. 0-0$, the move **$17. a3! a4$** (The only move. $17... \text{♕}a6$ loses after $18. \Delta c2!$) $18. \Delta :b4$ (but not $18... \text{♕}:d6?$ $\text{♕}d3+$ $19. \text{♗}e2 \text{♗}:f2+$ $20. \text{♗}:d3$ cd. And Black has very dangerous attack for the piece, threatening ab , $e4+$ and $\Delta f5+$) **$18... \Delta :b4$ $19. ab$ ab $20. f3$.**



Diagram 304

Now, this position is not critical anymore, since it is clarified enough and that was the purpose of our analysis. After the exchange of two minor pieces, the queen on f5 and the bishop on d7 are evidently misplaced. For example: 20...♔g7 21.0-0 h5 (21...♖:a1 is rather unattractive after 22.♗:a1 ♘e8 23.♗a7 ♗c8 24.♖c1 and Black

is not to be envied.) 22.♖fc1 and Black will have a hard time defending his numerous weaknesses on the queen-side. The pawns on the "b" file form a rather picturesque sight. So, White has the advantage.

Can we finally, on the basis of this analysis, condemn the move 13...♗f5!? To be able to answer affirmatively with full credit, it would be necessary to make some additional investigation of the pawn sacrifice for Black in the line: 17.a3! a4 18.♙:b4 ab.



Diagram 305

Now we have come to the critical position № 4. It would be insufficient for White to try to win a pawn, for example 19.♘:d6 cd 20.♙:d6 ♖fc8 with the idea to penetrate with the rook to c2 or 19.♙:d6 cd 20.♘:d6 ♗g5! and 21. 0-0 wouldn't do, because of 21...♗e7 with the idea to trap

the enemy knight.

White can avoid the capture of the pawn with 19. 0-0! (19.f3! is also good), after which the position has clarified

more or less. White has a strong knight on e4 and the pawn on d6 is hanging. The queen on f5 is still misplaced. White threatens f3 and g4, i.e. 19...♙:b4 20.f3! etc.

Although this analysis does not aspire to exhaust the possibilities in this position completely, we can still say that after 13...♚f5 White has the initiative as well as the advantage too. Do we have now enough reasons to condemn the move 13...♚f5 as bad?

No, not at all. It is not so simple. Before all that we have to see that the move 13...♚f5 might have been the least of evils. It is not quite sure that the other moves were any better. If we go back to the position before 13...♚f5, we have to check the other possibilities.

So, 13...♚e7 14.d5 (probably the best). 14...♜b4!



Diagram 306

This is much more active than 14...♜d8. 15.♚b3 The other moves by the white queen are not any better. 15...a5! 15...♙f5 wouldn't do after 16.♜:d6 ♜c2+ 17.♚e2 ♚:d6 18.♙ac1 and White gets a material advantage. 16.♜:d6 If immediately 16.a3, then 16...a4 and 17...♜a6 16...♚:d6! 17.a3

♜a6 18.♙:a5 ♜c5 and Black regains his pawn after 19.♚c3 ♜a4, as well as after 19.♙b4 ♜:b3 20.♙:d6 ♜:a1 21.♙:f8 ♜c2+! (But not 21...♚:f8 22.♙d2!) 22.♙d2 ♜:e3 etc. with an equal position.

Instead of 13...♚e7, 13...♚h4 is much more interesting and even stronger to be able to meet 14.d5 with 14...♙f5, and 14.g3 with ♚e7.

I am not going to analyse extensively the moves 13...♖e7 and 13...♖h4, but it can easily be affirmed that Black has an approximately equal position after them.

Now, finally after we have made a comparison between 13...♖f5 and 13...♖e7 (13...♖h4), we can make the final conclusion that the move 13...♖f5 was bad and it was the cause of the difficulties for Black in the aforementioned game.

Now, I can show you how this analysis will look like if we use only the system of signs: 13...♖f5? (13...♖e7! or 13...♖h4!) 14.d5! ♘b4! 15.♖b1! b5! 16.♗b3! a5! 17.a3! (17.0-0? was played in Eliskazes – Averbach, but was bad after 17...a4 18.♗:b4 ab?) 18...♗:b4! 19.♗d1! h5! with an equal game) 17...a4 18.♗:b4! with an advantage for White after 18...♗:b4+ 19.ab ab 20.f3!, as well as after 18...ab 19.0-0 (or 19.f3!).

So, as of result of our analysis our first impression, our “rough” evaluation that the move 13...♖f5 is unattractive, has been confirmed. We can only venture a guess that Averbach, applying only common sense, wouldn't have played 13...♖f5. He probably made this move after some calculation of variations and it must have been mistaken, though.”

This analysis shows that the process of going from a critical position into a clarified one is a long and laborious process.

In that same example we had to deal with a relatively simple analysis, in which the quantity of the different lines and variations was not so large. Very often, however we have to deal with situations in which one critical position transforms into another and all this needs a precise calculation of plenty of lines. It is not so easy then to bring the matters into clarified positions, and sometimes it is even impossible. Therefore, the chess player should be able to stop the analysis at some moment and to try to evaluate the position on the basis on his knowledge and experience.

When your evaluation is precise and profound, the probability that you are going to find the right plan increases. In the book of Lipnitzky there is a wonderful example in which he compares the process of evaluating positions and formation of plans with the approximate and the precise marking, when shooting.



Diagram 307

"White has the initiative. How should White increase it further, particularly while Black's queen side is undeveloped? At first the strong positional move **1. ♖e5** seems tempting. A lot of factors are in favour of this move: 1) The knight is centralized and it is going to take part in the king-side attack hampering Black's

development of the queen-side. 2) The diagonal "d1 – h5" is opened for the immediate participation of the white queen in the attack against the enemy king and that allows White to concentrate four pieces against it. 3) The knight on e5 will be hard to displace, since 1...f6 will not do after 2. ♗h5!, or 1...♗d7 2. ♗c6!

So, applying common sense we have found a rather attractive move. But this is still a "rough evaluation". What is going to be the diagnosis of some more subtle evaluation? We can now find a strong move for Black and that is **1... ♗a6!**, by means of which Black will get rid of the strong white bishop on d3. What to do now? Should White play 1. ♖e5 or not? Before we make a decision lets see if the move **1... ♗a6** has no refutation.

So, **2. ♗:a6 ♗:a6 3. ♗a4! ♗c8 4. ♗c6 ♗d6 5. ♗f4!** and Black can not take on f4 because of ♗e7+. But Black has a sufficient defence with **5... ♗c7!**. Since Black has this move at

his disposal, it seems like White should refrain from the move 1.♖e5. We have to mention that after 5...♗c7! 6.♗:d6 ♗:d6 7. ♖ac1 ♖c7 the position gets too simplified.

Well, White still has some initiative, but it is much less than in the initial position. Weighing all the pros and cons, we have to decide not to play 1.♖e5, since this move does not help the effective development of our initiative. 1.♗a4! is to be preferred. The white queen steps on a4 with a tempo and from this square it prevents the natural development of the enemy pieces.

It is well known that when you are shooting you use rough and precise markings. The first one gives the direction and the second one pinpoints the target. In the chess game the precise evaluation can often lead to the change of the direction itself. In this example- common sense is telling us that the queen may be well placed on h5, while the concrete analysis showed that the queen should head for the opposite direction – to a4.

The game, we are dealing with, continued with: 1...♗d6 2.♗g5! forcing the not too attractive 2...♗d7, since after 2...f6 3.♗h4 Black's position will be in shambles. 2...♗e7 3.♗:e7 ♗:e7 4.♖fe1 does not seem good for Black also, since White seizes the open "e" file just like in the famous game Botvinnik – Alekhine, AVRO-tournament, 1938, the Netherlands.

3.♗c2 h6 4.♗h4 ♖a6. And why not 4...♗a6 the reader might like to ask? In this case after 5.♗h7+! ♗h8 6.♗f5 ♗c6 7.♖fc1 ♗:c2 8.♖:c2 White can go into a complex endgame in which Black will have grave difficulties to further develop his pieces. For example 8...g6 9.♗f6+ (remember the check on move 5) 9...♗g8 10.♗h3 etc.

After 4...♖a6 there followed 5.a3 ♖c7 6.♖e5 ♗:e5 7.de and White's initiative transformed into strong king-side attack."

We can see that in the first case the analysis confirmed the common sense, non-concrete reasonings, while in the second

case it refuted them. In the contemporary chess the analytical approach dominates the formation of the plan and the evaluation of unclear positions. When the competitive player analyses deeply and precisely critical opening and middlegame positions at home, he will make life really hard for his opponents over the board. When you analyse positions and you clarify to yourself the essence of them, it is easier to formulate the right plan in comparison with when you apply only common sense. It is very difficult, however to make a transition from a complex critical position into a clear one in all the lines. The game of chess is very different from the game of "Russian" checkers, because it can not be formally dismantled into small pieces and that is what makes us love it. On the other hand, although we have to analyse critical positions having constantly in mind the evaluation and plan-formation, we never have to underestimate the importance of positional evaluation based on common-sense principles. Well, the analysis itself is a process, in which the constantly changing chain of different positions aims at finding a position, the evaluation of which leaves us no doubt about it.

The theory of Steinitz helps us to evaluate some, or other of the elements of the position, so we can not ignore it. It forms an essential part of the classic legacy and it is necessary to apply it creatively, while remembering this theory, just all the other theories, is not void of drawbacks.

The next stage of our studying of the classics is the hyper-modernism. Retti, Gruenfeld, Breyer, Tartakover and Nimzovitch are considered to be a part of this school by the chess historians. For us the study of the works and games of A. Nimzovitch are a must in the enlargement of our chess culture and erudition.

A lot has been written and said about the books "My System" and "My System in Practice" and I can hardly add

anything radically new. I would like to share with you some of my impressions from my studying of his games and I would like to give some advices to the young player who is starting to study the school of hyper-modernists.

At first I would like to talk about Nimzovitch. I appreciate him very much. I happened to have read his books at the beginning of the eighties, when I was already a master. I was deeply impressed with the subtlety of his views, his rich fantasy, the eloquence of his speech, which was obviously in conflict with the evaluation of his works, deeds and life, which was expressed from the Soviet press as an official opinion-with the idea to be embedded deeply in the conscience of the Soviet citizen as unfavourable. I was impressed by something else as well. It turned out that the principles of prophylactics, two weaknesses, pawn chains and pawn structures – all those principles that the young player had to find for himself, or read about in only parts of the comments of the great masters were invented, investigated and wonderfully described more than fifty years ago, in the books of Nimzovitch. At the same time some philosophical-chess terms as manoeuvring, over-defending, mysterious rook moves etc. were for me a jolt from the blue. I remember such a moment. I was playing over the game *Levenfish – Nimzovitch*, Vilna, 1912:

1.e4 c6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.ed ed 5.cd cd 6.♙b5+ ♘c6 7. 0-0 ♗d6 8.d4 ♘e7 9.♙g5 f6 10.♙h4 0-0 11.♘bd2 ♗g4 12.♙:c6 ♘:c6 13.♙b3 ♙b4 14.♘e5 ♘:e5 15.♙:b4 ♘d3 16.♙:b7 ♙e2 17.♙fc1 ♙c8 18.♘f1 g5 19.♙e3 f5 20.♙e5 ♙f7 21.♙a6 f4 22.♙e1 ♘:e1 23.♙:e2 ♘:g2 24.♘d2 ♘h4 25.♘f3 ♘g6.



Diagram 308

I noticed the explanation by Nimzovitch of the retreat of the knight from g2 to g6: "The consolidation of the position, by means of the retreat, and the regrouping of the forces is to be recommended strongly, particularly after some action with a favourable outcome, since such a result can bring

sometimes unnecessary relaxation, due to the disconcentration of forces." Nimzovitch formulated a chess maxim: "United forces – forward!". The game lasted only four more moves: **26. ♖h1 g4 27. ♘d2 ♗d7 28. ♜g1 ♝c2 29. h3 g3** and White resigned.

Approximately at the same time, I went to the movies and I saw the famous Soviet film "Liberation", about the War 1941-1945. There were some parts of it, devoted to the liberation of Bjelorussia. Imagine yourself the victorious march of the Soviet Army, liberating every day new territories, and ready to start an overwhelming advance into the neighbouring countries. Suddenly, at this moment there happens a telephone conversation between the superior commander of the Armed forces- the great soldier- Marshal G. Zhukov and I. Stalin. The latter takes a keen interest in the way the advance is going to continue, while suddenly Zhukov answers that it is high time the army started to defend. This sounds like a jolt from the blue. Stalin is furious, but Zhukov insists on his expert opinion, explaining that the army has been exhausted, the rearguard has stalled away from the spearhead and the munitions are almost nonexistent.. Just all that- we saw in Nimzovitch's comments. Small wonder that "The Father of the Nation" was presented in this film as a not so talented

commander, the same tendency we have witnessed in Zhukov's memoirs, though.

Lets go back to Nimzovitch. His maxims impress deeply and allow you to clarify to yourself a lot of universal chess truths, connecting them with real life. The weakness of the doubled pawns which is due to their impaired mobility is compared wisely by Nimzovitch with the crippledness of somebody who is sitting presently. The passive rook in the endgame (look at the game Pavlenko – Bagirov) he is presenting as a theatre star-actor who is about to blow the show. There are a lot of picturesque comparisons made by Nimzovich in his works, which I am not going to mention. The reader can get acquainted with them, himself. I would like to pay attention to some comments in the game collection about the tournament in Bad-Kissingen in 1928:

"The solid moves are usually good and they have to be recommended, still all they somehow follow the way to exploited paths, therefore we expect the chess player to play just like that, to be fond of and to respect the solid moves, since these moves solidify the position and usually prevent troubles. At the same time we don't have to avoid risky moves, we don't have to stand in the way of the free imagination and fantasy, since fantasy and creativeness are really attractive and the beauty of chess comprises mainly of that!"

Capablanca – Tartakover



Diagram 309

26.h5, threatening 27.h6 and then $\Delta g8$ and h7, rendering the flexible bishop on b2 into an overburdened camel."

Yates – Bogolubov



Diagram 310

"Black has a substantial advantage, if you only compare the long range bishop with the cramped knight, or the strong "d4" pawn with the pathetic "f4" pawn. Look at the queens: the white queen is squeezed in its den, while the black queen is ready to devastate the board."

Retti – Euwe



Diagram 311

"... 13...♖d8 14.d5? c6 15.♗:b6 The white bishop tried to go hunting a rabbit (the bishop on g7), but caught a sparrow instead (the knight on b6). 15...ab 16.♙e3. This move was evidently made by Reti – the aesthete, and not by Reti – the strategist. He obviously wanted to fill in the gaping hole

on e3, and at the same time to pay the tribute to the memory of the "fallen soldier", (the bishop – without any glory, though). White had to play White 16.♖fd1. 16...cd! 17.♗:d5 ♜c5 18.♙b3. The white queen could have felt satisfied with this humble haven, as early as move thirteen, instead of dreaming about a king's palace (♙e3)."

Tartakover – Spielman



Diagram 312

“The white rooks are enjoying the protection of the almighty bishop.”

Spielman – Marshall



Diagram 313

“11.d5? This is a mistake, and as usual it is caused by a wrong evaluation of the position. Here the incorrectness of the evaluation must have been caused by two psychological motives: 1) White feels that the poor position of the knight on b6 forces upon him a moral obligation to attack, which is a prejudice, not

overcome yet! 2) The slow development of the combusted piece mass d2, e2, e3, f3 does not suit White, it is evident that here we have the effect of subjective sympathy and antipathy, instead of objectivity.

The right strategy comprised in the plan a2 – a3, ♖d1 – c2 and ♙a1 – d1, after which the bundle of white pieces is liberated and White gets a good position.

11... ♗:f3! 12. ♘:f3 ♘e5 13. ♘:e5 ♗:e5. Lets make some conclusions. The move 11.d5 was premature and led to the weakness of the black squares in the White position, and

Black's position should already be considered preferable, although Black doesn't have a clear advantage, yet.

14.♖b1 ♜e8 15.f4? A plan not to be admired...! The black squares have been "confiscated". In fact this confiscation causes a lot of further inconveniences, in other words – a black square plague."

Yates – Retti



Diagram 314

"It is highly probable that the reader might be amazed with the sound resistance the black king managed to offer. The point is that the king used a brilliant saving resource – centralization. Now, we can see the effect: the king forms the nucleus, while the bishop on f4 and the pawn on g6 comprise the protoplasm, accordingly the

parts coordinate brilliantly."

Nimzovitch talks about the exchange variation (e4:d5) of the French defence in its different modifications in a very amusing way:

"Well, generally speaking the exchange variations can be officially forbidden from the tournament practice. This will lead to a form of justice, just like the tournament audience is forbidden to smoke (which is just, by the way), and the tournament players will be forbidden to "repel" the audience with exchange variations! Are we going to live long enough to witness it?"

Marshall – Euwe



Diagram 315

option to use the double chance to go to e5 and g5. To occupy one of these two squares, White had only when the occupation- the choice led to a clear advantage. Presently neither 18.♘g5+, nor 18.♘e5 brings anything. If, for example, 18.♘e5 (threatening ♘:g6) then 18...♘:e5 19.fe ♗g5, or 19.de ♗g7 20.f5? ef 21.♖:f5 b6 with pathetic results for White. Well, White had to slow down a little bit!

I can offer you such a line: 18.b4 a6 19.♖c2 ♖c8 20.♖cf2. Now, the threats ♘g5 or ♘e5 are really dangerous, besides White has an additional threat i.e. 21.g3 hg 22.♙:g3 and all White's pieces are on the verge of a decisive offence."

Tarrash – Capablanca



Diagram 316

"18.♘f3 – g5+. This move brings no aesthetic pleasure! Sometimes, when you develop pieces, as well as in defence, the non-aesthetic move can still be the best. But when you attack, the non-aesthetic move equals a bad move!

Why do we call this knight-check non-aesthetic? Just because the knight gives up his

"29...♙h7. Was 29...♙f7 really risky? What was Capa afraid of? If 30.♖b8 then ♖c4, for example: 31.♖:b5 ♖:g4 32.♖b7+ ♙f6 33.♖:a7 ♖:g2+ 34.♙b3 ♖g3+ 35.♙b2 (maybe 35.♙b4?) 35...♖g4 36.a4 ♖:h4 37.a5 g5! (Black wants to avoid the future checks of his king, so he prepares a safe lair for it at h5) 38.♙b3 ♙c6 39.a6 ♖f4

40.♖b7 ♖f6! 41.a7 ♖a6 42.♗c4 (threatening ♖b6+) 42...♗h5.
Or 40.♖c7 ♖f8 41.a7 and Black has good chances.

It is probable that the whole line can be improved somewhere, for Black particularly, but still if you don't want to catch cold the best way to avoid this is certainly not to ever go out. While, now not only the black king, but Capablanca himself seems to do exactly that! The prophylactics is no doubt something nice, it is an useful fruit of elaborate culture, but still, dear citizens, you can not live without breathing fresh air, you have to be enterprising, you have to be capable of risk and initiative!

When Capa played the humble 29...♗h7, instead of the fresh and enterprising 29...♗f7, we saw that the spectre of death through endless draws was giving nightmares to Capa deservedly."

I hope that the reader now has an excellent idea about the inimitable and juicy style of Nimzovitch – the writer. He lets the chess pieces breathe. The bishops sometimes suffer and then become overburdened camels, while his knights are sad and mourning and then suddenly become furious. In his introduction to the annotations of his game with Mieses, Nimzovitch writes: "... The further course of actions will become much more clear to you, if you imagine that the chess pieces are not wooden, but living creatures: the liberated "f5" pawn will be evidently eager to show the enormous amount of energy and the pale bourgeois army of White will surely succumb against it."

I would like to give some advices to the young player, before we start to study the hyper-modernists. Some words about the school itself are necessary at first. The theory arose and developed on the basis of a new approach to the chess centre. Tarrash presumed that the occupation and the building of a pawn centre is almost always useful, while the hyper-modernists preferred to control, or attack the centre

with pieces. Nimzovitch says: "Steinitz gave the beginning. What he said however, was so unnatural, because he was much above his contemporaries, that his "new principles" failed to become common knowledge.

Tarrash came next. He became a follower of Steinitz and managed to present his principles to the audience in an enjoyable popular form. We came now to our problem: as we said Steinitz was great and profound, but he was exactly that particularly in his understanding of the centre! For example the way in which he managed to render the strong enemy pawn on e4, in his defence in the Ruy Lopez (d7 – d6), into an evident weakness – this is one of his peaks of achievement.

He was much far away then anybody to the formal, arithmetical understanding of the centre..."

The difference in the apprehension of chess, and the different ideas led Nimzovitch and Tarrash to a mutual resentment which lasted all life long. The result of their meetings over the board was approximately equal for a long time. Up to 1920, the opponents had two wins each and two draws, but starting with 1923- Nimzovitch began to evidently prevail with three wins and two draws in a period of five years. But we don't have to forget that Tarrash was twenty four years older than Nimzovitch, and in 1923 he was already in his seventies. Unfortunately, Nimzovitch made some, not quite exemplary in correctness, comments about his opponent. In his annotations about the opening of the game Retti – Bogoljubov, Bad-Kissingen, 1928 he wrote: "The so-called Paulsen variation. We consider Paulsen, as well as Andersen and Lasker to be German masters with a lot of creative and competitive strength. Unfortunately, the Germans didn't produce any other genius chess-thinkers besides those three giants. Tarrash didn't introduce anything new in the chess ideology, while Zaemisch, although really gifted strategically,

was not a master of a great level." Here is another case, after the rather trivial draw between Tarrash – Marshal in the same tournament, Nimzovitch wrote: "The final position can not be considered drawish at all. If I were to make a decision, I would give 1/4 of a point to Marshal and a minus point to Tarrash."

Unfortunately, this lack of objectivity and even narrow-mindedness mars the overall impression of Nimzovitch's works. Generally speaking, when you study the works of Nimzovitch you have to be very critical towards him in the nice sense of this word. T. Petrosian termed "My System in Practice" as his not so much bible-book, but as a book he might like to have under his pillow, he said: "He was so much devoted to the possibility to impress upon his chess-playing readers "his" chess maxims, that Nimzovitch made a lot of mistakes under the impression that what he wanted was a part of reality."

Nimzovitch was a chess player on a really high level, extremely talented at that, and he was superior to the most of his opponents in the aspect of strength. Unfortunately, when annotating his games it was a rare occasion for him to show the strongest lines for his opponents. As a consequence there are quite a few really objective analyses in his books. As a whole, Nimzovitch was not really an analytic. He was an original and profound strategist, an excellent philosopher and propagandist, finally a strong competitive player, but hardly an analytic. Grandmaster R. Keene wrote a brilliant book devoted to A. Nimzovitch and managed to find an amazingly punctual definition of the system of Nimzovitch. He called it "explanatory hypothesis". In his remarkable "Textbook of Chess" Em. Lasker mentioned Retti's comments to the game Kolste – Retti, Baden-Baden, 1925. "The game Kolste – Retti started in the following way:

1.e4 ♖f6 2.e5 ♘d5 3.♗c3 ♘:c3 4.dc. In the magazine "Kagans Neuste Schachnachrichten" (1925, № 3) Retti, as a

member of the so-called hyper-modern school, terms this move as a positional mistake. According to his opinion the game "should be a nice illustration to the fact that with the high level of the contemporary chess-technique, even a small but clear positional advantage, obtained in the opening, can easily and consequently be used to reach a favourable outcome – to win".

Favourable outcome?... This classification is wrong. It is wise to say for seizing the initiative, for obtaining chances".

Further, Lasker pinpoints the mistakes made by White and proves that after a proper play by White, Black would hardly be able to win at all. Afterwards, he continues: "On such a tiny basis it is impossible to make a reliable strategical plan. The motive shown by Retti is not enough as an argument for the formation of the whole plan, since it is almost a trifle. When he goes astray from the basis of his analysis, he tends to make too bold, too general conclusions and then his reasonings turn out to be evidently wrong." Nimzovitch tended to use rarely concrete analyses in his works, for pity. I am going to give you some examples from the tournament book of the Bad-Kissingen tournament, which is a bibliographical rarity though, and enable the reader who is studying the classics to have the opportunity to be critical towards the examples from "My System" and "My System in Practice".

Capablanca–Tartakover



Diagram 317

In this position Tartakover played **22...♖d4** and after **23.g3 ♗:c4 24.h4 b5 25.♙g2 a5 26.h5** lost the game. Here are Nimzovitch's comments to the move **22...♖d4**. "This wins a pawn, but loses a lot of precious time. It seems to me that **22...♖d2** is much more natural. The immediate **22...b5** pre

sented certain chances for example 22...b5 23.cb c5 24.g3 c4 25.h4 c3 26.f4 ♖d2 27.♖f2? c2! 28.♙:c2 ♙d4 and Black wins; or 25.f4! (instead of 25.h4) 25...♖d2 26.f5 ♗d8 and White evidently can not win. After 23...b5 24.cb c5 it is of course possible to push the "f" pawn immediately, but in this case Black will still have some resources, for example 24.f4 (instead of g3) 24...c4 25.f5 ♖d2 26.g3 (if 26.f6? then ♙d4+ followed by ♙:f6) 26...♗d8 etc.

So, the realization of Black's pawn advantage looks as if leading to a draw!"

Lets have a look at this analysis. After 22...b5 23.cb c5 24.g3 c4 25.h4? c3? White should not play 26.f4? at all. The simple line 26.♖e1 ♖d2 27.♖e6 and 28.♖c6 finishes off the game easily.

On the other hand why should Black be in a hurry with the move 25...c3?, and why not 25...♖d2? Therefore, White in his stead 25.h4?, should better play 25.♖e1! and if 25...♖d2, then 26.♗f1 and 27.♖e2 with an easy win:

Spielman – Retti



Diagram 318

Retti played 10...♙g4 and the game soon ended in a draw after 11.♗d8+ ♖:d8. On this occasion Nimzovitch made the following comments: "Now, although I respect very much "the contemporary level of chess technique", and having a clear picture of the principally unattainable dream of creating complications, despite the will of

the opponent, I shall have to suggest with a tremor in my voice 10...♙c5. After 11.♙g5, there would follow simply 11...h6 12.♙h4 g5 13.♙g3 ♗e7 etc., end after 11. 0-0 we "arabbing the rifle" are going to attack the

enemy with: 11...♟g4 12.h3 h5 13.hg hg 14.g3 ♖h3
 15.♟g2 ♗f6 16.♗e2 ♗h8 17.♖fg1 ♖:g3+! and Black
 mates.

If White does not accept the sacrifice there might follow:
 13.♟d2 (instead of hg) 13...♗h4 14.♗e2 ♗g3 15.♟f3 and
 now we are going to play the consolidating 15...f6! Afterwards
 White can try to bother the displaced queen with 16.♟d2
 (threatening ♟e1 and ♟h1 next), but Black prevents the full of
 "technical poison" intentions of the enemy, liquidating
 everything altogether: 16...♟b5 17.c4 ♟:f2 18.♖:f2 ♗:f2+
 19.♗:f2 ♟:f2+ 20.♟:f2 ♟:c4 and the position lets Black
 enjoy a tiny material advantage in a solid position. The
 conclusion is: the suggested lines are either wrong,
 or...forgive me the sacrilege: the high level of contemporary
 technique – must be a myth!"

We are witnessing once again a jolly example of the genre
 of literature. What about the chess aspects of all this? Lets
 try to make a small investigation. After the moves:

10...♟c5 11. 0-0 ♟g4 12.h3 h5 13.hg hg 14.g3 ♖h3
15.♟g2 ♗f6 it is quite strange why White didn't play **16.♟e3**,
 instead of 16.♗e2. White threatens to seize the "h" file and
 White should try to continue with his now failing attack with
 some "heroical" measures like:

16...♖h2+ 17.♟h2 ♗h8+ 18.♟g1 ♗h3



Diagram 319

The position is really worth of
 a diagram. Black has sacrificed
 a rook and a knight, the bishop
 on "c5" is hanging, but the line
 19.♟:c5 0-0-0 20.♟e7 ♖h8
 21.♟h4 ♖:h4 22.gh g3 is not
 dangerous for Black, although it
 leads to nothing more than a
 draw. Still, we shall not witness

any "fairy tales" chess. Besides, White has the strong move **19.♖d5!** instead of 19.♗:c5. Now, 19...♗:e3 would be met with the check 20.♖:e5, and in case of **19... 0-0-0 20.♖:e5** the white queen controls the "h8" square and the material advantage decides the outcome of the game.

Some of the common sense reasonings of Nimzovitch are discussible, though. For example, he thinks that the pawn chain of the opponent should be undermined at the base. He derives his examples mostly from the French defence in which the move f7 – f6 for Black (against the pawn spearhead "e5") can lead to a serious weakening of the king, while the breakthrough c7 – c5 helps the organization of Black's counter-play on the queen-side. If we have a look, however at the pawn chains in the King's Indian defence on the squares d5, d6, e4, and e5 the situation is not so clear-cut. The move c7 – c6 in order to undermine the pawn-chain, without having to play f7 – f5 beforehand, is much more probable in the aspect of percentages, than f7 – f6, without the move c7 – c5 in the French defence. This wonderful observation was first made by the Moldavian master V. Chebanenko in his interesting article: "Has Nimzovitch Always Been Right?" in the magazine "Shakhmati in the USSR" № 5, 1988.

A lot of other chess-players have made interesting comments about Nimzovitch.

Here is an interesting excerpt from the dialogue between Znosko-Borovsky and Capablanca:

Znosko-Borovsky: "Well, if we have to trust Retti, you are to be responsible for the whole theory of hyper-modernism?"

Capablanca: "Oh, no, not at all! In the game, he is referring to, I made a small tactical combination to get a tiny positional advantage. To build up a whole system upon this narrow basis is simply ridiculous! Naturally, my style must have made

a strong impression upon the young generation before the War, but if I am not mistaken, you had written your first book about me, in which you somehow placed me in the "sphere of time" necessarily, and not in the "sphere of space", while you were treating the subject of the dynamics in chess. I do not trust the radical and awkward thesis of the hyper-modernists and prefer the simple and straightforward play of the classics."

Now, here is a part of the interview of Euwe, given to Znosko-Borovsky:

Znosko-Borovsky: "What are you going to say about the hyper-modernism?"

Euwe: "Oh, it is all over with that. There was something worthy of merit in this theory and we have taken use of it in the sense of understanding the position and the chess technique in general. But it hardly exists anymore as a wholesome theory anymore." August, 1931. Quoted from the magazine "Shakhmati in the USSR" № 2, 1991.

The contemporary chess players avoid to be so radical in the evaluation of the hyper-modernism. The ideas of Nimzovitch were worked over creatively and out of the "fairy tales", a lot of rational ideas were implemented in the tense competitive chess reality, nowadays. Sometime ago, I discussed with Artur Yusupov, a grandmaster who is more than familiar with prophylactics, over-defending, and the principle of two weaknesses, about what his opinion was of "My System" and "My System in Practice". He said that when he analyses the aforementioned books he begins to have the feeling that everything should be refuted altogether, but Nimzovitch's ideas are still useful and fruitful. In fact the most successful player in the implementation of the Nimzovitch's ideas in practice was T. V. Petrosian. Some of his wonderful games on the theme of prophylactics in the King's Indian defence, the reader has already seen in this book, and here I

am going to quote two other examples of his chess legacy on another theme, with the comments of the ninth World Champion:

***Reshevsky – Petrosian
Zurich 1953***



Diagram 320

“... White has a strong pawn centre, which is going to smash Black’s position to pieces, once it starts going forward. It is not clear however, whether White can ever start to move the pawns: if the “e” pawn is pushed, this will hardly be useful at all, the “d” pawn can not move, because the “d5”

square is attacked. Therefore I was happy with my position when I decided to go for it. Now, when I am having it on the board, I begin to convince myself that it is very difficult in fact. Why? Black’s pieces are occupying passive, strictly defensive squares. White can prepare the advance of the “d” pawn forward to the “d6” square and displacing the enemy pieces will get a winning position. On the other hand White can push the “h” pawn all the way down to “h6”. If I put the black pawn on “h6” or “h5” the king-side will be weakened and White will have a strong king-side attack operating with the light square bishop, the rook from “e3”, the queen and the bishop on “c1”.

I understood that if I managed to put the knight on “d5”, I would have changed the evaluation of the position radically – it would become very good. The movement of the white pawns would be stopped, the white bishop on “b2” would become a really bad piece, Black will be able afterwards to play b5 – b4 and obtain a passed pawn which would be

extremely strong with the support of the knight on d5 and the bishop on g6. It turned out, however, that to put the knight on d5 was far from easy. The knight can go there only via b6, c7 or e7. To bring it to b6 or c7 would require a lot of time and White will play ♖g4 – f3 and d4 – d5, with a winning position. So, it would be desirable for Black to bring the knight via e7, but how could I do that? I could go somewhere with the rook, but where exactly? Look at this line: 25...♖b7 26.♙f3 (threatening d5), or (instead of 26.♙f3) 26.e6 ♜e7 and the very strong now 27.♙f3. Further 27...♞d5 28.♙:d5 ♖:d5 29.♗f3. The rook is attacked, and it can go nowhere because it protects the rook on b7. If 29...fe, the simple 30.♗:d5 wins easily.

I thought over this position for a long time and when I finally found the right move I was even a little bit happy. The move is so simple that I was never in doubt about it. I had simply to overcome a psychological barrier, I had been talking about, so I left my rook to be attacked by the enemy bishop.

25...♖e6. "The inventive play of Reshevsky and the iron logics of Petrosian make this game one of the pearls of the tournament." (Bronstein)

If White plays 26.♙:e6 after 26...fe he can never manage to prevent the manoeuvre of the black knight to the "d5" square. The material advantage of White i.e. the extra exchange is not impressive at all. All the files are closed, the white pawns are deprived of any mobility, and Black threatens to bring the knight to d5 and start his queen-side advance.

The game continued in the following way: **26.a4 ♜e7.** Black does not fall into the enemy trap with 26...b4? There might follow then 27.d5 ♖:d5 28.♙:e6 fe 29.♗:c4 and Black position is in ruins, because the position has been opened and all white pieces exert maximum activity.

27.♙:e6 fe 28.♗f1 ♞d5 29.♖g3 ♙d3. If White refrains from giving back the exchange on d3, with for example 30.♗f2,

Black is going to have a rich compensation after b5 – b4. What is most important is that the material advantage of White is hardly ever felt, since he has only a rook against a minor piece.

Reshevsky captured on d3 – **30.♖:d3**. There followed: **30...cd 31.♙:d3 b4 32.cb**. White could have played here 32.c4 obtaining a mobile pawn chain in the centre, but Reshevsky played cautiously, since 32.c4 could be met with 32...♗b6. Black captures the pawn on a4 with two connected passed pawns to push forward. In this way the position would be very sharp and Reshevsky decided to avoid such developments. The game ended in a draw after: **32...ab 33.a5 ♖a8 34.♖a1 ♙c6 35.♗c1 ♙c7 36.a6 ♙b6 37.♗d2 b3 38.♙c4 h6 39.h3 b2 40.♖b1 ♗h8 41.♗e1**. Draw.

The next example illustrates the creativity of Petrosian in his application of the theory of Nimzovitch. He enlarged the concepts of his teacher in the aspects of prophylactics and blockade, anticipating not only the immediate threats and the forecoming dangers on the part of the opponent, but the initiative that might transform into a strong attack, just like the contemporary apparatuses forecast the forecoming furious hurricane at the sight of a small grey cloud.

Tal – Petrosian **Riga 1958**



Diagram 321

Petrosian's words "White has a big positional advantage. In fact the "d5" pawn is a protected passed extra pawn. It doesn't act any particular role presently, since it can be blocked easily on d6, as well as on d7, and even on the eighth rank, i.e. it poses Black no danger at the moment.

In the process of the chess fight, however the endgame stage is an integral part, and then the defended passed pawn plays a decisive role. How should Black defend here? There are no threats yet, so Black can play $\Delta d6$, then $\heartsuit d7$, $f7 - f6$, $\heartsuit f7$, the other rook to $f8$, be content with a passive position and wait for White to do something. Yet, sooner or later, if White plays well Black will be in great difficulties.

The experienced players know that when you are playing cramped positions- one of the main causes of trouble is that the rooks are in a much less favourable situation than the enemy rooks. For example, if White pushes forward the pawns on king-side, he would enjoy having long-range pieces, i.e. rooks on $f1$ and $g2$, while Black's rooks would have only the seventh and the eighth rank, waiting the position to get opened.

I managed to find a very interesting plan for a defence, which I liked very much then, I like it very much now, as well, and I think that it would be very instructive for every chess player.

Tal played **25. $\heartsuit f3$** and I answered with **25... $\heartsuit d6$** . This move seems to be rather strange at first sight. According to the laws of chess strategy the strongest piece is least suitable for such a blocking square and so on. If for example the queen occupies such a square it should be forced to vacate it after being attacked by any piece, while the rook will have to do that after being attacked by a minor piece. I had an entirely different idea however.

26. $\heartsuit b3$ $\heartsuit d7$ 27. $\heartsuit a1$ $\heartsuit g6$. This was the idea that I happened to like a lot. I anticipated that my rooks would be very passive and immobile, so Black exposes one of them the same purpose).

33... $\heartsuit e5$ 34. $\heartsuit f4$. It looks to me that White shouldn't have done that move. **34. $\heartsuit e2$** was possible. Then Black could play

34...g5 or 34...♖h4. It is not so easy to evaluate the arising positions, but White's extra-exchange would have hardly affected the game very much. Tal understood that the tables were turning and entered complications.

34...♖:c4 35.e5 ♖:e5 36.♗e4. White made several counter-sacrifices to open files for his long-range pieces – the rooks. Now Black has more than sufficient counter-chances.

36...h6 37.♖ae1 ♗b8 38.♗d1 c4. White has a problem now – Black threatens 39...♗a7+ and then ♖d3 with making threats. Besides, after the appearance of the knight on d3, the rook does not protect the d5 pawn. Tal tries to find some additional resources to save the game.

39.d6 ♖d3 40.♖g4 ♗a7+ 41.♗h1 f5 (the sealed move). The line 42.♗:f5 ♗:f5 43.♖:f5 ♖h4+ 44.♖h3 ♖:e4 is rather unpleasant for White. Still, the move **42.♖f6+** came to be a lucky find. The knight can not be captured, because of the check on c4. Now started a whole series of tactical strokes.

42...♗h8 43.♖:c4 ♖:b2 44.♖:a6 ♖:d1 45.♖:a7 ♖:d6 46.♖d7 ♖:f6 47.♖:d1 ♗b8. Black had excellent chances to win, but I failed to press my advantage home and the game ended in a draw."

Nimzovitch's ideas, modernized are often implemented by Anatoly Karpov.

Huebner – Karpov

Tilburg 1977



Diagram 322

In this position the World Champion № 12 played **12...♖a6!** His annotations to the move he made are really amusing: "The knight goes to the edge of the board!... A lot of people might quote Z. Tarrash, who asserted that the knight

was always bad at the edge of the board. There are no rules without exceptions. In this particular position the knight is placed on a6 much better than in the centre on d7. This knight is really busy: first, it over-defends the pawn on c5, against the breakthrough b2 – b4, secondly it does not stand in the way of the other pieces on the "c" file, and finally it is ready to join the additional defence of the important d5 square."

Be careful, Karpov talks about over-defending of the pawn on c5 and the knight on d5, which according to Nimzovitch do not occupy particularly strong squares. Nimzovitch presumed that it was worth to control and over-defend only strong outposts and squares, for example the "d4" square, while nowadays the concept of over-defending and prophylactics acquired a much broader treatment. **13. ♖:d5 ♙:d5** It wouldn't have been possible to take on d5 with a pawn because of 14.b4.

14. ♙c3 f6! 15.a3 ♗e7 16. 0-0.



Diagram 323

16... ♖hc8! Karpov makes no comments on this move. In this position the majority of players will put the rooks on d8 and c8, without giving it a second thought. What was Black after with his last move? Maybe the over-defence of the c5 pawn, so the mysterious rook move must be some kind of an elaborate

form of prophylactics, or maybe a brink in the chain of some complex plan. A little bit of all that. To be able to increase his space advantage, it will be enough to have a pawn on e5, and bring the knight to e6 or b5. Black is conscious, however that White is going to certainly react to that, so the only counterplay will be the b2 – b4 breakthrough. If lines are

opened on the queen-side the black rook on a8 will be rather happy, while if Black manages to occupy space and squeeze the opponent's position in the manner of the Maroszy scheme, Black can afford to lose some time to improve the position of the rooks.

17. ♖d2 ♜c7 18. b4 ♙:g2 19. ♚: g2 cb 20. ♙:b4 ♜d7
 21. ♙c3?! ♜d5 22. ♙b2 ♙h6! 23. e3 ♙:e3! 24. fe ♜:e3+
 25. ♜f3 ♜:f1 26. ♜:f1 ♚:c1 27. ♙:c1 ♚c8 28. ♙b2 ♚c2!
 29. ♙:f6 ♚a2 and Black won the endgame having two connected passed pawns on the queen-side.

**Karpov – Timman,
 Montreal 1979**



Diagram 324

In the limelight of the discussions between Nimzovitch and Tarrash the white pawn on e5 was treated much rather as weakness than as strength. The essence of Karpov's strategy in this game is the over-defence of this pawn! The ex-world champion takes the floor:

"22. ♜c2! A very precise move, which at first does not allow the black knight to go to c5 (because of the move b2 – b4!), and then continues with the strategical line of solidifying the e4 pawn. 22... ♙d7. Nevertheless, Black still intends to play ♜a6 – c5, so he would like to protect at first the c6 pawn (23... ♜c5 24. b4 ab 25. cb ♜e6).

23. ♜f3 ♚e7. 23... ♜c5 wouldn't do because of 24. e5. Black had to think seriously about 23...c5. Well, the Black knight on a6 might have felt a bit stupid then.

24. ♖f2. One of the last prophylactic moves. On the eve of the decisive offence, White is trying to place his pieces in the most harmonious way and... over-defends the central outpost on e4 once again! **24. ♖d3** was premature after **24... ♗c8.**

24... ♗e8. This is a mistake of a tactical sort. Black's position, however was already really bad and I felt my opponent to really dislike it a lot, so the outcome was near.

25. ♖d3! ♖b7. In case of **25... ♗b8** Black would lose a lot of material after **26.e5. 26. ♖a1!** An excellent move which in fact finishes off the game. Black is helpless due to his queen-side weaknesses. **26... ♗c7 27. ♖:a5 ♖d7 28.b4 ♗e6 29. ♗e3.** The position is completely winning for White, but still the play requires some precision. After **29. ♖d2 d5!?** Black can obtain something like a counterplay: **30.e5 ♗e4 31. ♗:e4 de 32. ♗d4 c5** with some complications. **29... c5 30.f5 ♗d8 31.b5.** To reach the state of happy oblivion, White should play only **c3 – c4**, and acquire a total domination. **31... ♗h8 32. ♗f2 ♖c7 33. ♖a4 ♖b8 34.c4.** Most of the job has been done. White should deliver now the final "coup de grace". **34... ♖a7 35. ♖:a7 ♖:a7 36.e5 de 37. ♗:e5 ♖a2 38. ♗:c5** Black resigned."

We have to make some conclusions now. At first some words about the books from this period, which belong to the classics and deserve some attention. It would be useful for the reader to have a look at the "Contemporary Textbook of the Chess Game" and particularly "New Ideas in Chess" of Richard Reti. These books illustrate the approach towards chess in the period of the hyper-modernism.

So, as a result of the discussion, between the classics and the hyper-modernists, chess improved a lot. The next stage of the studying of classics is particularly important. It can be marked by two great names: Capablanca and Alekhine. They were not subjected to any pressure from anybody, they played in an entirely different way, but they did it

magnificently. Their games are considered masterpieces up to the present day.

Why is it so important for us to study Capablanca and Alekhine? Lets think about how the contemporary chess looks from the side. Suppose, two approximately equal opponents are playing, for example Andersson and Huebner. One of them makes an active plan, the other one anticipates this plan and tries to prevent it. As a result of the plan and the counter-plan, White achieves a small advantage. Now a new plan is formed and accordingly a new counter-plan against it. Finally, the opponents fall into a time-trouble and the situation on the board gets messy. The logical development of the fight has been changed, and everything becomes unpredictable. It would be very difficult for the master to understand what had been going on, while the inexperienced player will evidently fail completely. But if, for example Capablanca plays Yanovsky or Alekhine plays Tartakover, the class of the third and the fourth World Champions was so higher than their opponents that the plans were executed flawlessly. Yanovsky probably had failed to even understand what was going on, so he had hardly ever reacted at all. You can see then, the whole plan in its purest form. You can never have the same picture against the contemporary grandmasters like Gelfand, Salov, Timman and even some others weaker than these, since their capability of resistance is much higher. Still, the young player should take his lessons in the stage of the formation of the plan from Capablanca and Alekhine, best of all, because their style was very harmonious and was not subjected to the radical views of Steinitz or Nimzovitch. By the way, Nimzovitch's "system" didn't help him too much in his games with Alekhine; and against Capablanca it turned out to be completely useless. Four loses and six draws – that is the balance of the games between Nimzovitch and Capablanca.

I do not intend to tell you the biographies of those two eminent champions and I am going to quote only one game. This long and strenuous job, to study the classical legacy, the chess player should perform himself. I would like to give you some advices that might be very helpful in your studying of the games of Alekhine and Capablanca. First about Capablanca. The chess player, while studying the classics, should try to find and read all the books by him and about him, because they are so few. Secondly, when you play over Capablanca's games, reading the book "My Chess Career" the student beginning with the match with Marshall, should try to work in the same way, which was recommended, when we had been dealing with Rubinstein. You have to try to guess every move by Capablanca, right after the opening and at the end of the game try to summarize your impressions in several sentences and possibly with a diagram, paying attention to the most interesting, from your point of view, moments of the game. Do not be afraid to fall under the impression of meeting with a ruthless "chess-machine". The understanding of Capablanca is very useful for every chess-player, while canonizing had been done by people with the intention to make a mess between chess and politics. The most objective and witty book about Capablanca was written by Euwe and Prins. Its name was "Caissa's Favourites" and it would be a must, when you study Capablanca's legacy. It would help you notice some tiny dark spots on the brilliant sun, but it would not mar your overall admiration of the Cuban genius. Besides, it would be easier for you to grasp some problems of philosophy, and not chess, that are treated there, for example during the analysis of Capablanca's endgame with I. Kan in the international tournament in Moscow 1936.

Finally, I would like to pay attention to the characteristics of Capablanca made by the future World Champion R. Fischer in 1964. The original and somehow paradoxical opinion of

Fischer about Capablanca you can share or not, but still it would be very good to get acquainted with it: "Capablanca became the champion of Cuba when he was twelve years old like a precious pearl of the chess world. From then on, until he died in 1942, he enjoyed quite undeservedly (just like Petrosian now) the reputation of the greatest master of the endgame for all times. I remember his game with Vera Menchik in which he made three blunders. This example, although not so typical, proves that Capablanca didn't know even the simplest rook endgames well. They say that in his life he must have played more than a thousand rook endgames, but I can hardly believe that.

Capablanca belongs to the circle of the greatest players, but not because of his endgame technique. His strong point was to play the openings simply and then to be brilliant in the middle game, so that the outcome of the game was predestined (although his opponents couldn't always understand that) before the endgame.

Capablanca had never devoted himself entirely to chess and he seldom prepared for tournaments. The simplicity of his style, attributed to him, is completely mythical. Capablanca lacked almost completely any sound theoretical knowledge, so he was forced to invest tremendous efforts to achieve the maximum of every position. His every move had to be with a pinpoint precision and sharpness, since he had to do something out of nothing. All that put the stamp of a great tension on the style of Capablanca. He put much more efforts than anybody else in the play itself, because his starting point had always been very unfavourable.

Capablanca matured very early, so he played his best games in the age between his twenties and thirties. He was the only one of the players from Latin America who had ever appeared on the world chess scene."

It would be best to study Alekhine's legacy after the book "Three Hundred Chosen Games of Alekhin". The first fifty three games from the chapters "Early Games by Alekhine" and "Alekhine – The Strongest Russian Player" you can play over without trying to find his moves, and starting with the chapter "Alekhine on the Road to the World Champion Title" you have to start your serious work, analogous to that one studying Rubinstein and Capablanca.

My long-term experience as a coach shows that every chess player improves a lot in his development after having studied Alekhine's games, maybe because his games comprise the final part of the classics and when the chess player comes to the moment to make his conclusions – the improvement appears as the prize for the efforts, invested in the studying.

Finally I would like to include here some subjective observations about Alekhine. As a person, he was not much to be admired, because of his racist views, shared with the public during the Second World War. The reader can read these articles by Alekhine in the "64 – Shakhmatnoe Obozrenie" № 18 and № 19, 1991. We are interested, however in Alekhine – the chess player and not in Alekhine as a person. As a chess player, Alekhine was a genius. You can learn everything from him: developing initiative, attacking, formation of plans, playing endgames, but maybe you have to pay a particular attention to his realization of advantages. If I had to choose just one of his games from the three hundred in the book, the game that impressed me most, I would not deal with the numerous games with spectacular attacks and combinations. I will choose the game with the American grandmaster R. Fine from the tournament in Kemery, 1937. The comments of Alekhine, I am going to quote without any changes, and just abbreviate a little his annotations to the opening, which are a little bit outdated.

Alekhine – Fine
Kemery 1937

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dc 3.♟f3 ♞f6 4.♟a4+ ♟d7 5.♟:c4 ♟c6
6.♞a3 ♟:c4 7.♞:c4 e6 8.a3 The check on b4 must be prevented.

8...c5? This is a dogmatic move which enables White to achieve a clear positional advantage. Black is in a hurry to counter-attack in the centre and forgets about the importance of the "d6" square. It would be brave and not at all anti-positional to play 8...a5 (preventing b2 – b4), and if 9.♟f4, then 9...b5 with ♟d6 next. After all, White wouldn't have managed to obtain so easily the two bishops-advantage.

9.♟f4 ♞c6. 9...♞bd7 would have been somewhat better. 10.♞d6+ ♟:d6 11.♟:d6 ♞e4 12.♟c7 b6 with ♟b7 next, still the dark squares would have been weak under any circumstances. 10.dc ♟:c5 11.b4 ♟e7 12.b5 ♞b8 13.♞d6+ ♟:d6 14.♟:d6 ♞e4 15.♟c7!. Presently, this bishop is White's only chance to win the game and I had to play extremely carefully to avoid its exchange! 15.♟b4 a5 16.ba ♞:a6 or 15.♟f4 f6 and then e6 – e5 would lead to an approximately equal game.

15...♞d7 16.♞d4! Once again an important move. the purpose of which is to build a pawn chain e4, f3, g2. It was not so easy to find, because White had 16.e3 as well as 16.g3 which were also interesting.

16...♞b6 17.f3 ♞d5 18.♟a5 ♞f6. Another important line here was: 18...♞d6 19.e4 (but not 19.♞c2 because of 19...♞c4) 19...♞e3 20.♟b4! e5 21.♟:d6 ed 22.♟d3! ♞:g2+ 23.♟f2 ♞e3 24.♟e5 with an advantage for White. 19.♞c2! This is the point of the manoeuvre, started with the move 16.♞d4. Black's knight is unable to penetrate to e3 and is restricted to a strictly passive role.

19...♠d7 20.e4 ♖c8. This intermediate move is not dangerous, since the displaced black pieces are not capable of causing any trouble to the white king on d2.

21.♗d2! ♜b6 22.♜e3 0-0 23.a4! Much stronger than the routine 23.♠d3, which would enable Black to make the liberating manoeuvre ♜b6 – a4 – c5.

23...♜fd8 24.♠d3 e5. After this weakening of the squares d5 and f5, Black would hardly be able to save the game. Black's only chance, modest though, was to play 28...♠e8 and eventually ♜fd7. White's plan after that would be similar to that one in the game: to exchange a pair of rooks, to retreat with the bishop from a5 and to displace the knight from b6.

25.♖hc1 ♠e6 26.♖c8 ♖c8 27.♜b4. White prevents the enemy king to be centralized and threatens to play eventually ♠d6.

27...♜e8 28.a5 ♜d7 29.♜d5! This move needed a precise calculation, because the passed pawn after the exchange on d5 might become a little weak. Black has to capture now the knight, because of the threat 30.♜e7+.

29...♠:d5 30.ed ♜c5. Black starts a "small combination" which gets refuted convincingly by White's 32nd move. What did Black have to do? The recommendation in the tournament book – 30...g6 would be hopeless for Black after 31.d6 f5 32.♜b1! ♗g7 33.♠a2 ♗f6 (or...♜ef6 34.♖e1) 34.♠d5.



Diagram 325

31.♠f5! ♖d8. Or 31...♜b3+ 32.♗d3 ♜c1+ 33.♗e3 ♖c4 34.d6 and White wins.

32.♗c3! This beautiful move liquidates both Black's threats: 32...♜b3+ 32...♖:d5+, the latter because of 33.♗c4! White has an overwhelming space advantage which should decide

the game in a few moves. **32...b6**. Or **32...♟d7** **33.♟e7** and White wins. **33.ab ab** **34.♟:c5!** The bishop played an extremely important role in this game and now it was not necessary anymore, because the passed pawn was to be stopped only at the cost of grave losses. **34...bc** **35.b6 ♟d6** **36.♟d7!** **♞:d7**. Instead of resigning... **37.♞a8+** with a mate in two.

This game possibly was my best purely positional achievement in the last two years.”

Watch this, if this game was purely positional, what would Alekhine's combinational games look like! The game with Fine brilliantly demonstrates the manner of realization of advantages by Alekhine. The majority of the players, some of them strong indeed, after having acquired an advantage are intentionally avoiding complications, being afraid of giving the opponent some additional chances. That usually brings about the opposite effect of the desired one, and only prolongs and complicates the road to victory. Alekhine was not one of them. When he got the advantage, he not only didn't avoid complications, but was causing them intentionally with an endless faith in his strength and his good position. This manner of realization of advantages lacks the easiness and the aesthetic feeling of Capablanca, but implies an unlimited force.

The present World Champion Garry Kasparov tends to act in the same way regularly.

Alekhine was a great analytic and commentator. If you need some additional chess-tutoring, open the tournament books of New York 1924 and 1927, Bled 1931, Nottingham 1936 and probably you are going to find the answers to a lot of problems of the chess strategy, as well as the causes for some reasonings about opening systems that have been forgotten presently.

The study of the games of Alekhine should be the end of your work upon the classics, which is extremely necessary for the young player as a basis for his further improvement. Besides the classics we had already dealt with, nowadays we have two still living chess classics, Mikhail Botvinnik and Vasily Smislov, the World Champions No. 6 and 7 in the history of chess. It is unthinkable for the chess player to enrich his chess culture, without having to play their games over and study them extensively.

As I have mentioned earlier, Botvinnik left an enormous chess legacy, but I recommend you to start studying it, after you have become an experienced master. I am an experienced coach and I think that the profoundness of Botvinnik's play would be very difficult to be grasped by a positionally non-experienced player and that would lead to a hard labour, rather fruitless though. Botvinnik should be best studied in the different openings, one by one. If you are interested in the Nimzovitch defence, or the French defence, the English opening or the Caro-Kan defence, the King's Indian defence or the Pirc-Ufimcev, you should better look at all Botvinnik's games, in the opening you are going to study, from the three-volume work "The Chess Games of Botvinnik" or the four-volume work "Analytical and Critical Works". You are surely going to understand clearly the problems that face both sides in the stage of transition between the opening and the middlegame. You are going to be acquainted with the different plans for both sides and develop some feeling of mistake-prevention. Nowadays, the chess players are trying to invent some new move in a well familiar position. Botvinnik used to invent new plans, new systems, new schemes. If you want to avoid to have to invent the bicycle all over again, you should better get acquainted with what Botvinnik did in the same opening. You are going to have plenty of opportunities to get yourself convinced of that, when you study the chapters

devoted to the Queen's Gambit and the Queen's Gambit Accepted.

Now, about Smyslov. I was advised by my coach – grandmaster Boleslavsky, to study to complete exhaustion the games of the World Champion № 7 in the history of chess. I had problems with the technical realization of advantages and similar problems face a lot of players, particularly the young ones. At that time Isaak Efremovitch recommended to me to study the book of Smislov's best games and to try to guess his moves right after the opening stage. Boleslavsky noticed that Smislov hardly ever had problems with the realization of advantages. Before I share with you my impressions, I would like to tell you a story which I heard first from grandmaster Genadi Kuzmin, back in 1971. We were talking about the international tournament "Capablanca – In Memoriam" in 1967, in which Smyslov participated, as well as Kuzmin and Savon. Vladimir Savon had a clear advantage in one of the games of this tournament, I don't remember which, and the game complicated a lot in the time-scramble and got adjourned in an unclear position. After the game Savon and Kuzmin analysed the adjourned position, trying to find the way to win and suddenly Smyslov happened to walk over. The dialogue, between Savon (who admired Smyslov very much at that time, their conflict for the place into interzonal happened much later) and Smyslov looked like that (I quote Kuzmin): Smyslov: "How are you doing, Volodia? Savon: "Well, Vasily Vasilievich, we are trying to find a win, but presently we still fail to." Smyslov looked at the position and after approximately two minutes said: "You missed the win and now your position is worse, so you have to fight for the draw. You can draw in the following way: you put the rook here, the knight there, and the bishop over there..." Having said what he could say, Smyslov went for a walk. Savon and Kuzmin couldn't believe that and analysed the position for

hours. Their extensive concrete analysis confirmed Smyslov's diagnosis. White was really worse, so he had to draw with the Smyslov's construction of piece- disposition. Savon and Kuzmin were very good chess players at that time, after all. Savon became the champion of the Soviet Union in 1971 and Kuzmin was considered to be one of the most talented young Soviet masters.

The chess players have told plenty of similar stories about Smyslov and his strikingly punctual and quick evaluation of positions, as well as his outstanding abilities to make the proper plan of actions. Smyslov was an excellent tactician as well. His "small combinations" haven't been praised by chess historians, as Capablanca's, but I don't think that they are any inferior to those of the great Cuban.

I was most amazed however, when I studied Smyslov's games by his rhythm of playing. He easily outplayed chess giants like Keres, Reshevsky, Boleslavsky, Bronstein and it looked like the process of amassing advantages with purely positional means would continue to the end of the game. You watch precise positional manoeuvres move by move and trying to guess his moves you feel somehow, that you are tuning to his brainwaves. Suddenly, quite unexpectedly, Smyslov makes a complete turnover and enters tactical complications. It looks like the moment for this decision has been chosen inappropriately and prematurely, still the tactical operations favour Smyslov always, so he wins in the quickest possible way. I wouldn't like to try to convince you of that without any examples, so here are some of his games. I am not going to analyse them profoundly, I am going only to turn the attention of the reader to some particular moments.

Smyslov – Letellie

Venice 1950

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘b4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 ♘:c3+ 6.bc ♖e7
 7.a4 ♖a5 8.♗d2 ♖c6 9.♖f3 cd 10.cd ♖:d2+ 11.♗:d2 ♖f5
 12.♗c3 ♗d7 13.♗d3 ♖c8 14.♗d2 0-0 15.a5 ♖c7 16.♖he1
 f6?



Diagram 326

White was much better and with his last prophylactic move Smyslov prevented the advance of the black "f" pawn. Black failed to understand the positional idea of his opponent and his position deteriorated immediately. 17.♗:f5! ef 18.ef ♖:f6 19.♖ab1 h6 20.♖b5! ♗e6 21.♖eb1 ♖ff7 22.♖e1 f4 23.f3

g5 24.♖d3 ♗h7 25.♖e1 ♖f6 26.♖c5 ♖c8.



Diagram 327

White has consistently squeezed the position of the opponent and prepared a surprising tactical operation. 27.♖b4! ♖:b4. In case of 27...♖e7 there would follow the beautiful combination stroke 28.♖:d5! ♖:d5 29.♖:e6! ♖:c5 30.♖:f6 ♖:c3 31.♖d6 and White regains the piece with a winning

position.

28.♖:e6! ♖:e6 29.♖:c8 ♖c6 30.a6! ba 31.♖c7+ ♗g6
 32.♖d7. White's combination is over and the win of the "d5"
 pawn guarantees an easy win. 32...♖e7 33.♗b4 ♖f5 34.♖:d5

♖e3 35.♗d8 ♜:g2 36.d5 ♞b6 37.♙c5 ♞b7 38.♞c8! ♜h4
 39.♗e2 ♜f5 40.♞c6+ ♗h5 41.d6 ♞d7 42.♞c7 Black resigned.

Smyslov – Lublinsky Moscow 1949

1.e4e5 2.♜f3 ♜c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 d6 5.c3 ♙d7 6.d4 ♜f6
 7.♜bd2 ♙e7 8. 0-0 0-0 9.♞e1 ♙e8 10.♙b3 ♜d7 11.♜f1 ♙f6
 12.♜e3 ♜e7 13.♜g4 ♜g6 14.g3 ♙e7 15.h4 ♜f6 16.♜g5 h6
 17.♜:f6+ ♙:f6



Diagram 328

As a result of the rather timid play of his opponent, Smyslov managed to achieve an active position. Try to guess his moves and you will see how calm positional moves are combined with tactical operations. Not many of his opponents had managed to neutralize the effect of such inflammable "Molotov

Cocktail".

18.♗h5! ♜h8 19.de de 20.♙e3 ♗e7. "It would be dangerous to accept the sacrifice of the knight. After 20...hg 21.hg g6 22.♗h4 ♙g7 23.♗g2 ♙c6 24.♞h1 ♞e6 25.♗h7+ ♗f8 26.♙c5+ ♞e7 27.♗:h8+ ♙:h8 28.♞:h8+ ♗g7 29.♞:d8 ♞:d8 30.♙:e7 White wins." (Smyslov).

21.♙d5! White forces the enemy pawn to c6 to deny this square for the bishop in the future.

21...c6 22.♙b3 ♙d7 23.♞ad1 ♞ad8 24.♞d2 ♙c8 25.♞ed1 ♞:d2 26.♞:d2 ♗c7. Black threatens once again 27...hg 28.hg g6.

27.♙c5! ♞d8. In case of 27...♙e7 White wins a pawn with 28.♙:e7 ♗:e7 29.♜f3 ♞e8 30.♗:e5! ♗:e5 31.♜:e5 ♞:e5

32.♖d8+ ♖h7 33.♖c8 and 33...♖e4 is impossible due to 34.♗c2. 28.♖:d8+ ♗:d8



Diagram 329

29.♗:f7! ♗:f7 30.♗b6! ♖d7.
If 30...♖:b6 – 31.♖:f7+ ♖h7
32.h5.

31.♗:d8 ♖h7 32.♗:f7 ♖:d8
33.♗g6+ Black resigned.

Smyslov – Koenig, Radio-match, USSR – Great Britain, 1946

1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♗f6 5. 0-0 ♗e7 6.♖e1
b5 7.♗b3 d6 8.c3 ♗a5 9.♗c2 c5 10.d4 ♖c7 ♗bd2 cd 12.cd
♗g4 13.h3 ♗h5 14.a4 0-0 15.♗d3 b4 16.g4 ♗g6 17.♖e2 h5
18.de de 19.♗h4 hg 20.hg ♗h7 21.♗f5 ♗c5 22.g5 ♗d7.

“Until now Black played excellently in the complicated position under the tension. Now, Black allows to get himself squeezed. He had to play the sharp: 22...♗:f5 23.ef e4! 24.♗:e4 ♗:e4 25.♗:e4 ♖g3+ 26.♖f1 ♖h3+ 27.♗g2 ♖:f5. It would be dangerous for White to take the exchange here, because of the exposed king position, so 28.♖f3 would probably be the best move with approximately equal chances” (Smyslov).

23.♗f1 ♗b3 24.♖b1 ♗d4 25.♖g4 ♖fd8 26.♗1g3 ♗f8.



Diagram 330

27.g6! The game gets rather lively after this pawn sacrifice.

27...♙:g6. "27...fg was worth considering- to protect the weak spot "g7" of the Black castle position. There might follow 28.♙c4+ ♜h8 29.♞e3 ♜d7 30.♞g2 ♞fe6 31.♞h1 or 30.♞de6 ♞e2 with a complex

and unclear position. It would be hardly possible to make a thorough analyses of the arising sharp position." (Smyslov)

28.♙c4! ♞c2?! After the pawn sacrifice Smyslov improves the position of his pieces, as if nothing has really happened, so his opponent loses his balance. Smyslov thinks 28...♞de6 was to be preferred, and he intended to play 29.b3.

29.♞f1 ♞a7. Smyslov affirms that it would be losing for Black to take the second pawn after: 29...♙:f2+ 30.♞:f2 ♜:c4 31.♞e7+ ♜h8 32.♞h2+ ♞h7 (or 32...♙h7 33.♞gf5 g6 34.♙g5!) 33.♞gf5 ♜c5+ 34.♙e3 ♞:e3 35.♞:h7+ ♜:h7 36.♞h4+.

30.♙g5 ♞d7.



Diagram 331

31.♞:g7! "The increasing tension in the game culminates here. The position of the pieces on the "g" file is picturesque indeed. Now Black could have taken the sacrificed knight, but his position would remain difficult. For example, 31...♜:g7 32.♞f5+ ♙:f5 (32...♞g8 33.♙f6 ♞d6 34.♞h6++ ♜h7 35.♞h4

♖:f6 36.♗g4+ ♘g8 37.♗:f6+ ♘g7 38.♗e8+ And White wins.)
33.ef ♖d4 (33...♗g6 34.♗h5!) 34.f6+! ♘h7 35.♗f4! ♗e6
(35...♗g6 36.♗h5+ ♘g8 37.♗:g6+) 36.♗h5+ ♘g8 37.♘h2!
and White has an irresistible attack.

Black tries to find counter-chances and decides to meet the sacrifice with a counter-sacrifice. That brings no change in the situation: nothing can stop White's attack." (Smyslov)

31...♗:f2+ 32.♖:f2 ♗:c4 33.♗e8 ♗h7 34.♗f6+ ♘g7?
Black could have continued to fight only with 34...♗:f6
35.♗:f6 ♖d6 36.♗h4 ♖:f6 37.♗:f6.

35.♗h6+! ♘h8 36.♗:d7 ♗d4 37.♗:e5 Black resigned.

I talked over my feelings, about the rhythm of playing of Smyslov, with grandmaster Yuri Balashov and he said about Smyslov that this is a natural quality of his and told me that Boris Spasky was very much impressed with the manner of driving a car by Smyslov. Spasky said that Smyslov usually drove very carefully and seldom went over forty-fifty kilometres per hour, yet suddenly he used to press the accelerator in the curves. The absolute feeling of rhythm, the excellent tactics and the magnificent positional understanding enabled Smyslov to set a world record of chess longevity and he participated in the final of the candidates matches in his seventies, although I think that Smyslov played his best games before 1958, and I recommend the young players to read first his book "Selected Games" published in 1952, and then "Seeking Harmony". We are finishing now with our course of the classics. Our contemporaries do not play any worse at all of course, but it would be much harder to understand the dynamic and ruthless chess of today if you haven't studied profoundly the chess legacy of the past.

Studying of the Endgame

The studying of the endgame should better be started simultaneously with the formation of the opening repertoire of the young player, or right after the end of it. The endgame technique is something very complex and the chess players need a lot of time and experience to master it, still this process can be accelerated by a well planned preparation. In my work "Endgame Strategy" I made a thorough exposition of the main principles of the endgame and the chess players I was coaching used to study this book extensively. Still my work as a coach showed that the understanding and the theoretical knowledge of the most important endgame principles comprise only half of the work, they have to be thoroughly tested in practice. You have to strive to play endgames, as often as possible to be able to learn to play it well. I think that the greatest effect can be achieved if you study some endgame principle in several examples from the book "Endgame Strategy" and then play for a while some other endgames on this theme against an opponent with an approximately equal strength. In this way the pupil can compare his playing with that one of the great players and he can easily see his mistakes and accumulate faster the desired knowledge. I would like to show you some examples of my work as a coach in Bulgaria – with the Champion of Bulgaria for women in 1991, the International Master Rummyana Gochewa and the bronze medalist of the World Championship for girls in 1991 Maya Koen. The two players sat down to play the endgame between Fischer and Reshevsky, USA 1963.



Diagram 332

White's positional advantage leaves no doubt. Let's see first the method of its realization demonstrated by the World Champion №11.

1.g5! ♖e7 2.♗e2! White consistently improves the position of all his pieces and only afterwards starts concrete actions, which is in complete

harmony with the principle "Do not hurry", because Black has no counter-play and is forced to watch the developments passively.

2...♭af8 3.♙e3 ♖c8 4.b4. White's pressure increases. Black has to reckon with b4 – b5, as well as with the simple improvement of the position of his opponent in the scheme ♗e2 – d3, ♖2 – ♖3, ♗3 – ♗4 etc. Therefore S. Reshevsky tries to block the position on the queen-side mechanically, but this leads to the appearance of new weakness in the Black's position – the pawn on a6.

4...b5 5.♗dd1! Black has now backward pawns at the edge of the board and another one on d6. To attack simultaneously three weaknesses is a little bit too much and R. Fischer allows Black to get rid of one of them, attacking one by one the pawns on h7 and a6.

5...♗e6 6.♖a1 ♖c6 7.♖h3! White tries to attack the weaknesses of the opponent to be able to disrupt the already pathetic state of the "lines of communication" (Nimzovitch's allegory) of the opponent.

7...♙f8 8.♖ah1 ♖c7.



Diagram 333

Black has been outplayed completely and it is time for White to reap the harvest. Fischer finds an exquisite concrete solution.

**9. B

h4!** Zugzwang! White provokes the move d5, because Black's rook can not exploit the seventh rank because of 10. B1. The ravine between the

two weaknesses was getting deeper with every move and small wonder that Black goes to the bottom quickly. **9...d5** **10. B1!** The Black rook should be forced to occupy the sixth rank. **10...Bc6** **11. e**+**d5** ♖:d5 **12. B**d1**+** ♜e6 **13. B**d8****. When the Black rook is on c6 the move 13...♗g7 is unavailable for Black. **13...♜f5** **14. B**a8**** ♜e6 **15. B**h3!**** The threat ♜f3+ enables Fischer to force the win of a pawn. The rest of the moves made by Reshevsky can be attributed probably to inertia. The game ended after: **15...♗g7** **16. ♜:h8** ♜:h8 **17. ♜:h7** ♜e8 **18. ♜f7+** ♜g4 **19. f3** ♜g3 **20. ♜d3** e4+ **21. fe** ♜d8+ **22. ♗d4** ♜g4 **23. ♜f1** ♗e5 **24. ♜e3** ♗c7 **25. ♜g1+** ♜h4 **26. ♜f3** ♜d7 **27. e5** ♜f7+ **28. ♜e4** ♜f5 **29. e6** ♗d8 **30. ♗f6** ♗:f6 **31. gf** ♜:f6 **32. ♜d5** ♜f2 **33. ♜e1**. Black resigned. This is a magnificent example of an exquisite endgame technique!

Lets see now what the two women did:

Koen – Gocheva

1.g5 ♗e7 **2. B**d3?****! White tries to "seize the bull by the horns" immediately, with the idea to win the weak "h7" pawn, disregarding the centralization of the king and the improvement of the position of the rest of the pieces. In a few words – White is in a hurry. **2...Baf8** **3. B**dh3**** ♜f7 **4. B**h6**** ♜g7 **5. ♗e3** ♗d8. M. Koen forced the opponent's rooks to defend the pawns on g6 and h7 and it was high time now the king's

position was improved with the move 6.♔e2. Instead of this, White is attacking immediately with – 6.f4?, which enables us to conclude that our students have learned the principles like “Do not hurry”, “Centralize the king” only theoretically, but they are far from their application in practice. There will come a time when the chess player will like to improve the position of all his pieces and under the tic-tacking of the chess clock, the hand will reach for the king. with the idea to play ♔e2, and then b3 – b4, c3 – c4 and b2 – b3. This desire for improvement of the position first, and then the start of the active actions will become as natural as the wish to breathe fresh air, to feed, to drink, to sleep etc. Only then we can talk about the mastering of the elements of the chess technique.

6...♗c6 7.c4? ♜b6? Black makes a mistake in his turn as well. The move 7...♞e8! would have punished the opponent severely for the disregarding of the centralization of the king.

8.♜d2 ♞f8 9.fe de? Now 9...♞e8! was once again to be most seriously considered. 10.♞:h7 ♞ff7? The final mistake. Black's position becomes suddenly very difficult after the exchange of one pair of rooks. It was necessary to retreat with the rook -10...♞g8 with counterplay. If then White tries to force the exchange of a pair of rooks with 11.♞f1, after 11...♞:f1+ 12.♔:f1 ♜d4 Black gets suddenly very active, since the exchange of the bishops 13.♜c3 ♜:c3 14.bc ♞f8+ and 15...♞f4 enables Black to hope for a draw in the arising rook endgame. We could witness then a typical mistake in the solution of the problem of exchange.

11.♞:g7 ♞:g7 12.b4! Now, everything is over. The game continued:

12...♜d4 13.b3 ♞e7 14.♞h6 ♞e6 15.♞h7 ♜b2 16.♞g7 ♜d4 17.♔e2 ♜b2 18.♜e3 ♜c3 19.b5+ ab 20.cb+ ♔:b5 21.♞:b7+ ♔a6 22.♞f7 Black resigned.

In the process of my work with the players I have mentioned, they had to increase their knowledge in the

endgame studying the book "600 endgames" by L. Portisch and B. Sharkozi, as well as the chapter "Rook and a Pawn Against a Rook" from the book "The Theory of the Rook Endgames" by G. Levenfish and V. Smyslov. I wouldn't advise you to study continuously multi-volume works on the endgame, since I consider such a work useless. The chess player should have a starting basis of precise knowledge in the different types of endgames and should have some idea of the methods of reaching the aim in the theoretical positions.

Besides that, the rook endgames require particular attention. They occur in practical games very often and abide to some laws which are sometimes different from the other endgames. The chess player should be excellently prepared with an exact knowledge about the endgame – rook and a pawn against rook, to be able to operate constantly with it in case of simplification of the position. He should have an idea about the rook attack from behind, the frontal attack with the rook, as well as cutting off the enemy king on the rank etc. Besides, the chess player should master some common principles of the rook endgame such as: the king should support the own pawns in sharp endgames, while the rook should take care of the enemy pawns and not vice-versa. If you have the opportunity to compromise the monolithic pawn mass of the opponent, or to win some separate pawn on the side, you should better work on the pawn mass, or if you have to choose between a passive defence, or a pawn sacrifice to activate the rook, you should much more often prefer the latter etc. Some of these rules the chess players can find in the "Endgame Strategy" in the chapters "The Problem of Exchange" and "Think in Schemes", but unfortunately my concepts there were not necessarily concentrated on playing exactly rook endgames, so I will try to compensate this omission quoting some examples from "Endgame Strategy"

accentuating on the interpretation of the principles in the rook endgames.

We are going to begin the study of practical rook endgames with an endgame of this type:



Diagram 334

The chess player should understand that if the White pawn is pushed forward one square, i.e. 1. ♖a8 ♜f6 2. a7? we are going to have a "dead" draw on the board, so the only acceptable try to play a win for White will be to sacrifice one of the pawns on the king-side with the idea to free the rook and

enable the advance of the king towards the passed pawn. In cases like that, in general, all ends in an endgame of the type: king and a rook for the stronger side against king and a pawn for the weak side. Here is something like an analysis of this endgame: 1. ♜f3 ♜f6 2. ♜e3 ♜e6 3. ♜d4 . White king should abandon his pawns, since there is no other way to play actively. The line 3.f4 ♞a3+ is going to change nothing. 3... ♞f2 4. ♞c7 ♞a2 5. a7 ♜f5 6. ♜c5 ♜g4 and Black achieves an easy draw.



Diagram 335

Black can play of course 1... ♞a2 and draw, still the better way to do this will be: 1... ♞b6! 2. ♜f3 ♞e6! and it turns out that the white king can not pass the "e" file and the rook is stuck to defend the "a6" pawn.



Diagram 336

If White tries to shatter the enemy position on the king-side with the advance of the "f" pawn, Black should better make a mechanical blockade. For example: **3. ♖g2 ♜g8 4.f4 f5!** and White has nothing left to do except push the "a" pawn forward, but after **5. ♖a8+ ♜g7 6.a7 ♖a6**, the position will be

completely drawish.

White can try something different, **4.f3** is possible instead of 4.f4. Now **4... ♖e2+** and **5... ♖a2** looks good for Black, but suppose Black decides to adhere to the aforementioned defensive line: **4... ♜g7 5. ♜h3 ♖b6 6.g4 hg+ 7. ♜:g4**.



Diagram 337

White threatens to play **8.h5** and this will lead to an endgame rather unpleasant for Black with "f" pawns and an outside passed "a6" pawn. The theoretical books affirm that this endgame should be a draw, but after a precise defence by Black. Therefore, after the exchange of a pair of pawns,

Black should better go immediately behind the enemy passed pawn with the manoeuvre **♖b6 – b4+ – a4** with an easy draw. You might try to object against the necessity of the last example. Why should Black try to look for some new ways to make a draw, if in the position on the penultimate diagram he can easily solve the problem with **1... ♖a2?**

Naturally, you don't ever try to improve on something that is good enough, and the manoeuvre **♖b2 – b6 – e6** is not

quoted here for the sake of the art (there are cases when the chess player analyses a position and he finds three ways to reach the goal, still this doesn't preclude him from looking for a fourth way and I don't see anything wrong with this approach). In this case I was guided strictly by practical considerations. The white king has a long road to go to help the passed pawn on the "a" file in this case, but suppose we move the passed pawn one file to the right:



Diagram 338

Here the move $1... \text{Bc6!}$ is going to be very helpful for Black, while the other way to draw $1... \text{Bb2?!}$ will lead him only to difficulties, since the route of the white king from the one side to the other has been evidently shortened.

Further, the chess player must understand that the greater number of pawns on the king-side for both sides will complicate the task of the weak side to reach the draw, because to organize counterplay, on the road to reach the endgame of king and pawn against king and rook, will be much more difficult. A lot depends here on the pawn structure on the king-side. Some details, not so evident at first sight, play a decisive role in the right evaluation of the position and enable the player to win or draw. Here are some examples.

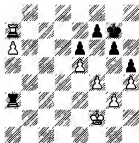


Diagram 339

side: **1. ♔e2 ♚g3 2. ♖c7 ♜a3 3. a7** and Black is helpless against the march of the white king to the "b7" square.



Diagram 340

This interesting example was taken from the game **Spassky – Torre**, Hamburg 1982. Presently, it is not easy to say whether this endgame is winning for White or not. The game continued: **1... ♜d1+ 2. ♔h2 ♜h5 3. ♜h4 ♜d2 4. ♔g3 ♜d3+ 5. ♜f3 ♜d2 6. ♜a8+ ♔h7 7. ♜a4 ♜a2 8. ♜a5 ♜f6?** The decisive mistake.



Diagram 341

It would not be easy to explain immediately the harsh evaluation of the last Black's move. You think seriously about this position and try to find a schematic forced win for White and I will help you a little bit with the remark to pay attention to the difference of the position of

the black "f" pawn, on "f6" or "f7".

Now, let's see the solution demonstrated by B. Spassky. I congratulate you, if you have managed to find it yourselves. If not- don't be cross. The majority of the players I had been coaching, who became subsequently Soviet masters and International Masters failed to solve the same problem.

9.a6 ♖g6 10.a7! We meet here an entirely different plan to win. In an analogy with the previous examples, White must put the rook on "a7", play ♖h2 with the idea ♖g1, and if Black plays ♜a1, push the pawn to "g3" and start the march of the king to the "a6" pawn on the first and the second rank, sacrificing one of the pawns on the king-side. Black will have counterplay on the king-side preserving the chances to make a draw. The reader should be able to make an analysis of such developments independently. Spassky's move seems paradoxical at first sight. We saw that when both sides have three pawns on the king-side – to push the pawn to the seventh rank would be a blunder leading to an immediate draw. To be able to understand the profound idea of the ex-world champion we must have a look at the following positions:



Diagram 342

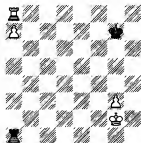


Diagram 343

In the first case White can win easily pushing the "f" pawn without the help of the king. When the white pawn is on "f5", the move f5 – f6+ decides, even if Black can control this pawn "two-handedly" (king on g7 and rook on a6). It is impossible to capture the pawn with the king because of ♖f8+, as well as to capture it with the rook, because the white rook plays a move on the eighth rank; and if the king retreats ♔f7 – ♖h8 wins.

In the second case the "g" pawn can not deprive the enemy king from the squares g7 and h7, therefore despite the two extra pawns the position is a draw. These positions should be perfectly understood and remembered by the chess player studying the rook endgames.

Now back to the game Spassky – Torre. Spassky noticed that Black can not prevent the advance of the white pawn on the "f" file, after the preparatory move g2 – g3, accordingly he pushed his passed pawn to a7. This pawn advance wouldn't have been dangerous for Black, had the black "f" pawn been on its initial square. Black would simply exchange the pawns on "f4" then and make the move g7 – g6 after which the possibility of White to create a passed pawn on the ranks "e" or "f" would be completely out of the question. E. Torre had played 8...f6? however, and now he could not exchange pawns on "f4", since White would easily win the game without the help of the king, with the creation of a passed pawn on the "e" file. Black should therefore remain passive, after the move f3 – f4 and allow White after the exchange on "e5" to create a weakness for Black on "e5". The next stage of the White plan is to win the "e5" pawn with the help of the king and the zugzwang. The described scheme of actions enables us to predict the helplessness of Black and an easy win for White. The game continued:

10... ♔h7 11. ♔h2 ♖a1 12.g3 ♖a2+ 13. ♔g1 ♔g6?! The only practical chance for Black was the move 13...g5!?. Still, White has a nice choice between 14.hg fg 15.♖e8 and 14.♖f8 ♖:a7

15. B.f6 . After the text move with the king to g6 the White's plan develops easily to the end.

14.f4! e7 15.fe fe 16. e1 Ba1 17. e2 g6 18. d2 Ba4 19. c3 Ba1 20. c4 e7 21. d5 Ba5+ 22. d6 .



Diagram 344

Spassky intended to reach an identical position with a black king on "h7", when he made the move 10.a7! Black is completely paralyzed. His rook is stuck to the "a7" pawn, while Black's king has some squares, it is soon going to be deprived from. So, **22... g6 23. e6 Ba1 .** Black makes a move which

equals resignation.

The line 23... h7 24. f5 g6+ 25. f6 led to the same result. There followed: **24. e:e5 e7 25. f5 Ba5+ 26.e5 g6+ 27. e4** Black resigned.

The method to win this endgame, shown by Spassky, is very instructive and you should always have it in mind.



Diagram 345

This is a position from the game **Polugaevsky – Vasyukov**, Tiflis 1957. White is to move. The reader may think, after the previous example, that White wins easily pushing the "b" pawn all the way forward to the "b7" square and then winning the enemy "e5" pawn with the help of the king.

Indeed, it looks like Black can not do anything against such a plan. If you try to think more deeply about this position, you

will be able to notice that this same plan would not be so effective with a position of the black pawn on "h5".



Diagram 346

Despite the two extra pawns, White can hardly create a passed pawn on the "f" file, and as we know passed pawns on the "g" and "h" files wouldn't do anything. Therefore the game should end in a draw. Our logical analysis shows the right solution and the move is 1.h5!

Now, Black is forced to take the pawn, because the move 1...g5 would not prevent the creation of a passed pawn in the aforementioned events, while after 1...gh White already has a passed "f" pawn, under the condition that the black "e5" pawn disappears. In the game White played **1.b5?** and Black answered with the routine **1...Bb4?** (1...h5!) after which L. Polugaevsky came to the right plan with **2.h5!**. There followed: **2...gh 3.b6 h4+ 4.♟f3 ♟h7 5.b7 ♟g7 6.♟e3 e4**. The passive waiting play wouldn't change anything. After **6...♟h7 7.♟d3 ♟g7 8.♟c3 Bb1 9.♟c4 Bb2 10.♟d5** the pawn on "e5" would disappear from the board, since **10...Bb5+** would be followed by **11.♟c6** and **12.Bc8**.

7.♟f4 ♟h7 8.♟e5 ♟g7 9.♟d5 Bb2. The pawn on "e4" was doomed. In case of **9...♟h7** White was winning after **10.♟c5 Bb2 11.♟c6 Bc2+ 12.♟d5**. The game was over after: **10.♟:e4 Bb4+ 11.♟d3 Bb3+ 12.♟c4 Bb1 13.f4 Bc1+ 14.♟d3 Bb1 15.f5 Bb6 16.f6+** Black resigned.

It will be fair to mention that **3.♟f3** was better than **3.b6**, and Black missed his chance to save the game with **3...Bb3+ 4.f3 e4!**, but this possibility was more or less accidental and presents no methodical interest. After White's omission on

move 1, if Black had played 1...h5!, Polugaevsky would have to adhere to the plan to push the pawn to b6, play the rook to b7 and advance with the king. Black has a serious chance to draw then, after he takes one of the White pawns on the king-side creating counterplay there.

Pavlenko – Bagirov
Baku 1964



Diagramme 347

The endgame presently is far from drawish, because of the presence of the bishops. Black's positional advantage is evident, because of the difference between the activity of the rooks. It can be predicted that White will fail to preserve the material equality and will have to give up the "a" pawn to

activate the rook and exchange the bishops. In this case the experienced player should immediately concentrate his attention to the king-side and try to occupy some space, because the fate of the game will be decided there, since there will be nothing unpredictable in the developments on the other side. Black is to move now and V. Bagirov played **1...g5!**, paralyzing the pawn structure of the opponent. **2.gf1 h6**. This is a useful move, but 2...a5 seemed more logical.

3.g1 e1 Bc2?! The white king tries to approach the king-side and Bagirov anticipates the intentions of his opponent. Still, 3...Bb3! was better to continue with the attack of the "a3" pawn.

4.f4 e4. In case of 4.Bd1 Black will play 4...Ba2 5.Bd3 Ac4 6.Bc3 Be2+. **4...Bb2 5.Bc1?** The International Master M. Dvoretzky pointed out that here White could have made good

use of the opponent's imprecision on move 3 with 5.♖d1!. Now, if 5...♖b3 6.♖d3, and if 5...♖a2 6.♖d3 is even stronger, because the white bishop left the "g2" square and Black can not meet 8.♔d1 with ♖:f2. **5...♖b3 6.♖a1** White falls back on passivity and this tactics leads him to surrender. While the bishops are on the board, the active move 6.♖c7 would bring no remedy because after 6...♖:a3 7.♖:e7 ♖a1+ 8.♔d2 a5 nothing can stop the white pawn to reach the "a2" square. **6...a5 7.♗c2 ♖b2 8.♔d1 ♗b3 9.♗:b3 ♖:b3.**



Diagram 348

We have now a rook endgame. A. Nimzovitch described an analogous situation picturesquely in his work "My System", indeed the opponents had two pawns each on the king-side then: "It is a regular occurrence in the master's practice when one of the partners starts some long

manoeuvres, moreover applies maximum efforts to activate his rook and passivate the enemy one as a result of all this. The active rook then glammers in sincere satisfaction, just like a prima-donna, who enjoys acting the main part, while her rival is furious in her mise-en-scene appearance. We have witnessed many cases, not so surprising though, when the humiliated rival falls ill and the show gets blown."

We have read here an advice, that might be useful later. If you are faced with a choice to defend passively in a rook endgame, or sacrifice a pawn to activate the rook, you should better make the latter choice. In our case however, the pawn sacrifice – 10.♖c1 ♖:a3 11.♖c8+ ♔g7 12.♖a8 wouldn't help White much, because Black has occupied a lot of space on the king-side. Now we can appreciate the value of the move

1...g5!, which prevented the future counterplay of the opponent there, anticipating the appearance of a rook endgame with an extra pawn. The rest of the actions follows the script written by Black.

10.a4 ♖b2 11.♗e1 ♖b4 12.♖a2 ♗g7 13.♗d2 h5 14.♗e2 e6 15.♗f3 f5. Bagirov continues to occupy space on the king-side. 16.♗g2 ♗f6 17.h3 ♖e4 18.♖a3 ♖c4 19.♖a2 ♗e7. Time for actions on the queen-side. 20.♖a1 ♗d6 21.h4. This a desperate attempt to change the course of the events. 21...gh 22.gh ♗c5. Black pays no attention to the "h4" pawn. After 22...♖:h4?! 23.f4 O. Pavlenko would have some chances for a favourable outcome. 23.f3 e5 24.♗g3 ♗b4 25.♖d1 ♖c3 26.♗f2 ♖c5 27.f4 ef 28.ef ♗:a4 29.♗e3 ♗b5 30.♖d8 a4 31.♗d4 ♗b4 32.♖b8+ ♖b5 33.♖c8 a3 34.♖c4+ ♗b3. White resigned.

**Tukmakov – Shereshevsky,
Tiflis 1980.**



Diagram 349

White's advantage, due to the occupation of the only open file is out of the question. Black has now to make the plan for the defence. He has two opportunities: to wait passively allowing the White's rook to penetrate, or try to organize the breakthrough a4 – a3 with the position of the rook on a8. In

this case Black should be ready to part with the pawn on b6, but the rook will be free for action. In the first case White will put the rook on c7 or c6, bring the king to d3, prepare the pawn advance e3 – e4 and subject the opponent to his will. Well, indeed, it is not quite clear whether the positional advantage will be enough to win the game, but Black will

meet with a lot of difficulties then. On the other hand, the pawn-sacrifice for Black looks risky. There are five pawns on the king-side and in the centre for each opponent and as we already know this is favourable for the stronger side. There is something very peculiar in this position – the white pawns on the “g” file are doubled. Black is to move now and he takes advantage of the situation on the king-side, which may be decisive for the outcome of the game. **1...h5! 2.Bc6 Bb8 3.f3.**



Diagram 350

V. Tukmakov prepares the advance of the king to the centre and the pawn push e3 – e4. Black does not intend to defend passively and sacrifices a pawn to get an active counterplay. **3...a4!** If the white pawn on g3 had been on h3 or h2, and had White managed to play g3 – g4, Black would have

with “fingers crossed” to comply with the difficult defence in a position with an equal material. In the arising position however, Black has a “ready” counterplay on the king-side. If we try to think in schemes, we are going to notice that when the black rook attacks from behind the white passed pawn from b2, the white king will be unable to advance to the queen-side, because of the loss of the g2 pawn. Black will have then his potential passed pawn on the “h” file, which will be no less dangerous than its “b” counterpart. I want to emphasize once again that the reader should always watch the king-side very attentively in similar positions. **4.♠f2 Bb8 5.e4.** White tries to play actively, isolating and winning the central pawn of the opponent. **5...a3 6.ba B:a3 7.ed ed 8.Bd6 Ba2+** The white king is forced back and it becomes clear that the draw is near. **9.♠g1 g6 10.B:d5 Bb2 11.♠h2 Bb1 12.g4 hg 13.fg Bb3 14.g3 ♠f8.** The

black king heads for the "e6" square and White will not be able to remain with an extra pawn. Draw.

Timman – Andersson
Wijk-an-Zee 1981



Diagram 351

White has the advantage because the rook penetrated the enemy position, but whether this will be enough to win is not easy to answer yet. **1...h5**. U. Andersson creates prerequisites for an active counterplay on the king-side. **2.♘d3 h4**. If **2...♙g6** **3.♙a7** comes. **3.♙a7**.



Diagram 352

Black is faced with a difficult choice. He can play **3...a5!** **4.ba** **5.♙:a5 ♙g6** **6.♙h5 ♙:g2** **7.♙:h4** sacrificing a pawn, but simplifying the position and activating the rook, and **3...b5?!** keeping a passive position with an equal material. The Swedish grandmaster preferred the

second option and misguessed. Indeed, the way to win demonstrated by Timman was hard to anticipate. Suppose, Black had played **3...a5** and had lost the game, the commentators would have surely put a question mark to that move and an exclamation mark to **3...b5** and the author of the book would have done probably the same. Unfortunately, the attempts to find the absolute truth are very strenuous and while writing a book about methods – hardly possible. In the contemporary magazines we can meet extremely rarely

thorough, explanatory comments. As a rule only players like: the World Champion Kasparov, grandmasters Huebner, Ftacnik, I. Zaicev, as well as the coach of Yusupov and Dolmatov – M. Dvoretzky; and some earlier – the ex-world champion Fischer and grandmaster Keres tended to do that. Naturally, during the analyses of their games and some fashionable positions, plenty of players reach the essence of the matters, but still only few of them like to publish their findings. These remarks were not made with the idea to direct the reader to read only books and magazines marked with the profoundness of the exposition of material. Moreover it is my opinion that a great number of concrete lines, without any additional verbal explanation of the events in the game, sometimes depress the not so experienced player reaching an undesired effect. I would like to appeal to the reader to treat critically all chess writings, no matter what was the level of the play of their authors. If you have the feeling that you disagree with me and you think that my conclusions are based on sand, you can try to find the truth since truth has different meaning to different people.

Lets return to the events in the game:

3...b5?! 4.a5 Bc6 5.♗d4! Andresson must have underestimated this king- manoeuvre. It becomes clear now that 5...Bc4+ 6.♗d5 B:b4 will be met with 7.♗d6 f6 8.B:a6. 5...♗f8 6.♗d5 Bg6 7.e4! ♗e8.

Now we come to a new and very important principle in sharp rook endgames. What would have happened after 7...B:g2? B. Jurashevich commented the game in the "Chess Informant" № 31 and gave the following line: 7...B:g2 8.B:a6 Bg3 9.Ba8+ ♗e7 10.♗c5 B:h3 11.♗:b5 g5 12.Bh8 Ba3 (12...g4 13.a6) 13.♗a6! h3 14.b5 g4 15.b6 g3 16.b7 Bb3 17.B:h3 and the race ends in White's favour. The endgame was really rather sharp, but the experienced player should be

able to guess that all the chances are on the White's side and the concrete lines can only confirm this.

We can formulate the following rule, concerning rook endgames with mobile passed pawns on different sides: *the rook must fight with the enemy pawns and the king should support the own pawns.*

This general rule is true in the majority of cases and it will enable you to find your way easier and look for some additional light-houses. Naturally, we are talking about positions in which the pawns for both sides have been advanced about equally. **8. ♖c5 ♜e6.** Black is suddenly in something like a zugzwang. The move **8... ♜f8** would surrender the d7 square to the white rook and after **9. ♜d7 ♜:g2 10. ♜d6 ♜g6 11. ♜:g6 f6 12. ♜d6 g5 (12... ♜e8 13. ♜e6) 13. ♜d7 g4 14. e5 g4 16. e6** Black loses because of the lack of only a tempo in the king and pawn endgame. **9. ♜b7!** Timman sets on the course of decisive actions. Now starts a sharp conflict, which meanwhile quickly ends- enabling White to force the win.

9... ♜:e4 10. ♜b6 ♜:b4 11. ♜:a6 ♜b2 12. ♜b6 ♜:g2 13. a6 ♜a2 14. a7. The rest of the game is not so interesting. After **14... g5 15. ♜c5 f5 16. ♜b8+ ♜f7 17. a8 ♜ ♜:a8 18. ♜:a8 g4 19. ♜d4 g4 20. ♜h8** Black resigned.

Timoshchenko – Shereshevsky Tiflis 1980



Diagram 353

Black's position looks dangerous. The white pawn has advanced all the way up to d7, the black king seems vulnerable, and Black has to reckon with the attack of the white rook on the "d" file. To decrease the tension will only

be possible with the exchange of the queens.

1...♖c3! 2.♗:c3 White had no other choice because of the threat to check from the g5 square.

2...♗:c3 3.♗d6 ♗c7 4.♗:g6 ♗c:d7 5.♗:d7+ ♗:d7. When Black played 1...♖c3 he had to calculate the possibility of a transition to a king and pawn endgame after 6.♗g7+ ♗e6 7.♗:d7 ♗:d7. In this case Black can easily draw, despite the White's protected passed pawn, after playing a7 – a6 and a march with the king to the "d6" and "e6" squares.

6.♗h6 ♗d2+ 7.♗h3.



Diagram 354

Black has to make a choice: which pawn to attack – a4 or f3? It is easy to answer this question applying common sense. After 7...♗a2? 8.♗:h5 (8.♗h7+ ♗d6 9.♗:a7 ♗f2 is not dangerous for Black) 8...♗:a4 9.♗g4 We meet with a situation we have been dealing with before. The white king will

enable the advance of the passed pawns and the rook will fight with the enemy pawns (the pawn on h2 is of no importance) and for Black vice-versa. Besides you have to know that the isolated, the doubled pawns are not dangerous at all in the rook endgames, whereas the connected passed pawns are really powerful. *Therefore, if you can capture an isolated pawn, or disrupt a pair of pawns or a pawn mass, you should choose the second option.* Black gave no second thought about it with 7...♗f2! The game continued:

8.♗:h5 ♗:f3+ 9.♗g4 ♗a3 10.♗h7+ ♗e6 11.♗:a7 f3 12.♗g3 ♗e5 13.♗e7+ ♗d4 14.♗f2. (There was a threat 14...♗e3).

14...♗a2+ 15.♗:f3 ♗:h2.

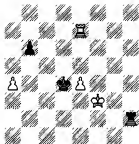


Diagram 355

As a result of the forced moves, White has won a pawn but the position has simplified. Black should apply some precision though. There followed:

16. ♖d7+ ♜c5. The natural move 16... ♜e5 would be a blunder, because 17. ♖d5+ and 18. ♖b5.

17. e5 ♖h4! The white king must be cut off from the passed pawn. **18. e6 ♖h6 19. e7 ♖e6 20. ♜f4 ♜c6 21. ♖a7 ♜d6** Draw.

This example will be the last one in this book about complicated practical rook endgames. The chess player should have noticed by now the main principles and examples to illustrate them can be found easily. As I mentioned before, you need some exact knowledge of some theoretical endgames, as well as you have to master some typical manoeuvres – all that concerning "rook and pawn against rook". These words must not seem to you a general instruction, therefore I will submit here the interesting article "Deceptive Simplicity" (with some abbreviations) published in the newspaper "Bulletin of the Central Chess Club of USSR" in 1989.

"The rook endgame is considered to be an integral part of the endgame technique. I agree with that, particularly if I add that even the imperfect mastership of this incredibly complex technique is so unapproachable for the majority of the players that nowadays- there is not a single player that can be called perfect in rook endgames, the last two World Champions included."

A. Alekhine, 1927

As you know, the introduction of the six hour time-control led to the sudden decrease of the number of the adjourned games. Most of the chess experts consider that the tournament players now will be much less inclined to analyse endgames. We think this is only partly true. The players who enjoy analysing will certainly continue to do so.

Before that, you could adjourn your game after forty moves and you could start to analyse the position at home calmly. Now you have this opportunity only after you have made at least sixty moves on the board. By that time the board will be almost empty and those endgames you used to play only after a thorough concrete analyses, now you have to play in the tense time-limit of one hour for twenty minutes, after four or five hours of play before, and probably after a time-trouble at that. Therefore, we think that the importance of the independent work on endgame positions has increased. If such positions arise after approximately 50 – 60 moves, you can not, as before, use the information you had from your home analysis after the adjournment, when you could have analysed this position and even refer to some books if you could. Now you have to do everything on the board and do it quickly.

The endgames that occur most often in practice are the rook endgames. In our article we are going to study such endgames with the minimum "cast" – "rook and pawn against rook". By the way all our examples will be similar in one aspect: one of the opponents (and maybe both) will make mistakes.

We are going to use concrete examples with the idea to prove that the percentage of mistakes in such, seemingly simple endgames is very high even among strong players. We are going to try to find the reasons for this.

The material has been arranged in such a way, as that has been done in most of the endgame books. First of all we are going to study positions with a bishop pawn, after that with a central pawn (very similar to the latter type), afterwards with a knight pawn and finally some complicated examples with a rook pawn.

Positions with a bishop pawn

№1

**Sax – Tzeshkovsky
Rovinj – Zagreb, 1975**



Diagram 356

In this position Black decided his position was completely lost, so he resigned. This decision must have been made just out of common sense reasons: the king is cut off from the pawn, and the rook does not have enough space for the successful attacking of the white king on the ranks. Despite all

that – the position is a draw! Black can save this position with attacks from the side, on the rank. The black king has occupied a place, where it should be in this method of defence, i.e. on the short side, and the rook manages to take the necessary position to attack from the long side. **1... ♖h7!** **2.f7 ♖c8!** The only move. **2... ♖c6+?** loses after **3. ♗d7 ♖f6** **4. ♗e7** or **2... ♖e1?** **3. ♗d7 ♖f1** **4. ♗e7 ♖e1+** **5. ♗f8 ♖h1** (**5... ♖f1** **6. ♖h3+** **♗g6** **7. ♗g8**) **6. ♖e3** and **7. ♗e7** next.

3. ♗d7 (**3. ♗e7 ♖c7+** **4. ♗e8 ♖c8+** **5. ♗d7 ♖a8!**) **3... ♖a8!** and a draw, because the rook now has more than enough space for example: **4. ♗c6 ♖f8** or **4. ♗d6 ♖h8**.

White can not achieve anything after **2. Bg7+ ♔h6!** (but not 2...♔h8? 3. ♖e7 ♖c6+ 4. ♗f5 ♖c8 5. ♗g6) **3. Bg8** (3. ♖a7 ♗g6) **3... ♖c6+** (3...♔h7? 4.f7) **4. ♗e7 ♖c7+** **5. ♗d6 ♖a7** and the rook is once again "long" enough.

№2
Capablanca – Menchik
Hastings 1929

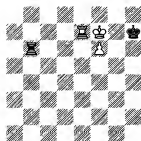


Diagram 357

This endgame was superbly analysed by N. Grigoriev:

"You are inclined to say that White has a simple win. But in this case this evaluation is wrong: Black has a sure draw.

1... ♖a6? This loses...Black had to play **1... ♖b8!** After that Black was not afraid from **2. ♖e1 ♖b7+** or **2. ♖e8 ♖b7+** **3. ♗e6** (if **3. ♗f8 – 3... ♗g6**) **3... ♖b6+!** **4. ♗f5 ♖b5+!** **5. ♖e5 ♖b1.** **2. ♖e6** (or **2. ♖d7**) is harmless too, after **2... ♖a8** **3. ♗e7 ♗g8** **4.f7+ ♗g7** with a draw in all lines.

2. ♖d7?? White does not take advantage of the mistake of the opponent and in his turn makes a terrible mistake. It is possible that Capablanca was in a time-trouble. **2. ♗f8+!** was winning easily and was simple enough.

2... ♖a8! now everything is OK for Black and the position is a draw. **3. ♖e7 ♖a6?** This loses once again. Black had to play **3... ♖b8!**.

4. ♗f8! White finds the right way, although a little bit late. The pawn manages finally to go to "f7" and that wins.

4... ♗g6. Or **4...♔h8** **5.f7 ♖a8+** **6. ♖e8 ♖a7** **7. ♖e1 ♖a8+** **8. ♗e7 ♖a7+** **9. ♗f6.**

5.f7 ♖a8+ **6. ♖e8 ♖a7** **7. ♖e6+ ♗h7** **8. ♗e8??**

This is just an improbable mistake for Capablanca, which can not be forgiven. Maybe he was careless, but this was also impossible to forgive. 8.♖e1 was winning simply and easily. There could follow: 8...♖a8+ (if 8...♗g6 – 9.♗g8) 9.♗e7 ♖a7+ (or 9...♗g7 10.f8♙+) 10.♗f6 ♖a6+ 11.♖e6 ♖a8 12.♖e8 ♖a6+ 13.♗e5 ♖a5+ 14.♗d4. After the text move the position is a draw once again.

8...♖a8+ 9.♗e7 ♖a7+?

It is very hard to guess what made V. Menchik (who was a really strong master) refrain from the evident move 9...♗g7, after which the draw is obvious. The position of the white rook on the sixth rank deprives White from any chances, for example 10.♖a6 (to prevent the checks on the rank) 10...♖h8 11.♖a7 ♖f8 (or 11...♖c8). There was not any sense in continuing to play this position.

10.♗f6 and Black resigned. (Indeed, Black managed to lose this position single-handedly) This was a very interesting endgame, abundant with mistakes though.

There is an interesting story behind this endgame. The right method of defence in this position was shown in the game Steinitz – Blackburn, Vienna 1898! Afterwards the game Capablanca – Menchik was a kaleidoscope of mistakes. The last one to make a mistake was the world champion for women, accordingly she lost, so the always delicate – N. Grigoriev had to put question marks twice on the moves of the Cuban genius, while annotating this game.

Many years after, in the USSR Spartakiada of the schools we met this position:

№3
Pekker – Ermolinsky
Alma-Ata, 1974

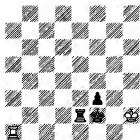


Diagram 358

It is not difficult to notice that the same position has arisen, just like in the previous example, only with reversed colours.

1. ♖a3? Pekker makes the same mistake, as Menchik did 45 years before. After **1. ♜b1!** – the draw is easy.

1... ♜f1+! If Ermolinsky had decided to "imitate" Capablanca, he had to play **1... ♜d2??**, but he wins instead.

2. ♜g3 f2 3. ♜a1+ ♜e1 4. ♜a2 ♜e3+ 5. ♜h2 ♜e8! (5... ♜e1? 6. ♜a1+ ♜e2 7. ♜g2 with a draw) **6. ♜g3** (6. ♜b2 ♜h8+ 7. ♜g3 ♜g1 or 6. ♜a1+ ♜e2 7. ♜a2+ ♜f3 8. ♜a3+ ♜e3 9. ♜a1 ♜e1 and Black wins in both cases.) **6... ♜g1.** White resigned.

№4
Sveshnikov – G. Kuzmin, Tashkent 1980

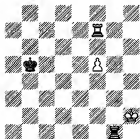


Diagram 359

1... ♜g8 2. ♜h3.

We are going to study the move **2. ♜e7** a little bit later.

2... ♜c5 3. ♜e7 (3. ♜d7 ♜c6 ♜d1 ♜g5! with a draw)

3... ♜g5? 4. ♜e5+ ♜d6 5. ♜h4 ♜g1 6. ♜e2 (with the help of some tactics White managed to cut off the enemy king from the pawn)

6... ♖d7 7. ♗h5 ♖g8 8. ♗h6. Black resigned.

Black made a decisive mistake on his third move. 3... ♗d6 was leading to a draw after 4. ♖e6+ ♗d7 5. ♗h4 ♖e8! 6. ♖a6 ♗e7 7. ♗g5 ♖g8+ 8. ♖g6 ♖a8 9. ♖g7+ ♗f8 10. ♗g6 (or 10. ♖b7 ♖a6 leading to the Philidor position) 10... ♖a6+ 11. f6 ♖a1 and the white king can not avoid the checks on the files.

So, after the move in the game 2. ♗h3 Black could have made a draw. Lets have a look now at 2. ♖e7!. Grandmaster Beliavsky commented this endgame in the Yugoslav "Enciclopedia of Chess Endgames" and he gave such a line:

2. ♖e7 ♖f8 (2... ♖g5? 3. ♖e5+ ♗c6 4. ♗h3 ♗d6 5. ♗h4 leads by a transposition to the same position from the game, lost for Black) 3. ♖e5+ ♗c6 4. ♗g3 ♗d7 5. ♗f4 ♖e8.

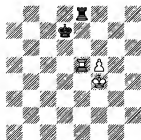


Diagram 360

Further, Beliavsky continues with: 6. ♖a5 ♗e7 7. ♖a7+ ♗f6 8. ♖a6+ ♗f7 and the king managed to come in front of the pawn – draw. The commentator missed the move **6. f6!**, after which White wins easily, which was not so difficult to notice after all.

So, it seems that the initial position is winning for White and Sveshnikov made a mistake with the move 2. ♗h3. No, not at all – in answer to 2. ♖e7, instead of the losing move 2... ♖f8?, Black must play with the king immediately:

2... ♗c6! 3. ♗h3 ♗d6 4. ♖e1 (4. ♖e6+ ♗d7 5. ♗h4 ♖e8 with a simple draw) 4... ♖g5! 5. ♖e6+ ♗d5! and White loses the pawn.

So, grandmasters tend to make mistakes not only when they play endgames like this, but even when they analyse

them. By the way, you are going to see from our next examples, that is far from being the only case.

No 5
Huebner – Timman
FRG 1985



Diagram 361

Shall the white king be able to join the fight against the black passed pawn actively?

1... ♖e6 2. ♗h5 ♘d6
(2... ♜e2 3. ♜f3 ♜e5 4. ♞:e5+ and a draw) **3. ♜f3 ♞c5**
4. ♗h6+ ♘d5 5. ♖e3 ♘c4
6. ♘d2 ♘b3 7. ♞d6 ♘b2
8. ♘d1 ♞c1+ 9. ♘d2 ♞c2+
10. ♘d1 ♞c3 11. ♘d2 c5.

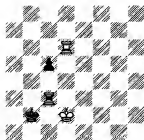


Diagram 362

Now, White could have drawn attacking "from behind" **12. ♞b6+ ♞b3 13. ♞c6 ♞b5 14. ♘d3 ♘b3 15. ♞c8** and Black can not push the pawn without allowing the white king to go to the "c2" square.

The game continued with **12. ♞d5?? ♞c4 13. ♘d1** (White couldn't save the game with

13. ♗h5 ♞c2+ 14. ♘d3 ♞c3+ 15. ♘d2 c4 16. ♞b5+ ♞b3 17. ♞c5 ♞d3+ 18. ♖e2 ♘c3 and the white king is cut off along the file)

13... ♞c2! 14. ♗h5 c4 15. ♞b5+ ♘c3 16. ♗h5 ♞g2. Now, after **17. ♞c5 ♞g1+ 18. ♖e2 ♞c1** a theoretical position arises, which is won for Black. Therefore White resigned.

Huebner's decision on move 12. was completely unexplainable, because Timman had one more way to win the game which was even shorter: 12...c4 (instead of 12...♖c4) 13.♗b5+ ♗b3.

№6

Kochiev – Smyslov

Lvov, Zonal Tournament 1978

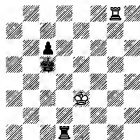


Diagram 363

The black pawn is very far from the promotion square. The most effective method of defence in positions like this is the defence "from in front", when the rook of the weaker side checks the king in front of the pawn.

V. Kart and A. Mihalchishin annotated this game in the tournament bulletin "The Zonal Tournament for the World Championship in Lvov". They wrote: "As you know, according to the rule of "six", introduced by A. Sheron, if the number of the rank, on which the pawn is placed, added to the number of the files, the pawn is away from the enemy king, is not more than six, the position is a draw. Now, we have $3+1=4$. So, the draw must be the normal result in this position."

Now, we have to correct this. Sheron studied this type of endgames in the twenties, and he formulated the rule of "five" and not the rule of "six". That rule can apply, with some exceptions, in positions with central pawns and bishop pawns. Sheron tried to establish the rule of "six", concerning the knight pawn, but several years after his analyses were refuted by N. Grigoriev. You can learn a lot more about this if you study the volumes of "Chess Endgames" by Y. Averbach.

In our case, we have a position with a bishop pawn, so the rule of "six" has nothing to do with this. For those players who start to yawn when they hear some dull scientific word like "rule", we are going to quote something from the same "Chess Endgames" as a consolation: "In endgames of this type it is much more important to understand the methods of attack and defence than to memorize some formal rule." By the way, in another work that belongs to the classics – the book "The Theory of Rook Endgames" by G. Levenfish and V. Smyslov, the authors wrote the whole book, avoiding any formal rules, when they explained the method of defence with checks from "in front".

1. ♖e2 ♖d5 2. ♖g1 ♖b4 3. ♖b1+ ♖a3 4. ♖e3 c5 5. ♖e4 ♖d2 (5... ♖d4+ 6. ♖e3) 6. ♖c1 ♖d4 7. ♖e3 ♖b4 8. ♖b1+ ♖c4 9. ♖c1+ ♖b5 10. ♖h1 ♖d8 11. ♖b1+ ♖c6 (threatening 12...c4) 12. ♖c1 ♖d7.



Diagram 364

This situation is typical for the method of defence from "in front". Black can not manage to push the pawn, because of the frontal checks and tries his last chance – lets the opponent to make a move. White has to find the only move 13. ♖e4 (13... ♖d4+ 14. ♖e3). White must play this move exactly, and you

will understand why after five moves.

13. ♖e2? ♖b5 14. ♖b1+ ♖a4 15. ♖c1 ♖b4 16. ♖b1+ ♖a3 17. ♖c1 ♖d5!

Now you can understand, because if the king was on "e4", Black wouldn't have this opportunity.

18. ♖e3 ♖b2 19. ♖c4 ♖b3. White resigned.

№7

Marianovic – Bronstein, Vrshac 1979



Diagram 365

Lets see first how the game proceeded.

**1. ♖d7 ♗a7+ 2. ♖d8 ♗a4
3. ♗b5+ ♜a7 4. ♜c7! (4.d5?
♜a6!) 4... ♜a6 (4... ♗c4+ 5. ♗c5)
5. ♗b6+ ♜a7 6. d5 ♗c4+ 7. ♗c6
♗b4 8. d6 ♗b7+ 9. ♖d8 ♗b8+
10. ♗c8 ♗b1 11. d7 ♜b7 12. ♖e8
1-0.**

This endgame was first published in the "Chess Infomant" № 28 commented by the winner. After the move 4. ♜c7! there was a mark that "White had a decisive advantage". So, from the logical point of view the position was a draw before that. Where did Black make a mistake then? Maybe on move 2? Marianovic puts a question mark to the move 2... ♗a4 and makes the following comment: "2... ♗b7! 3. ♗c5 ♗b6 4. d5 ♗d6+ 5. ♜e7 ♗h6; 3. ♗h5!?" Now, you can not understand from these comments, whether the move 2... ♗b7 makes a draw or not, and what is the evaluation of the initial position.

Grandmaster Kovacevic annotated this endgame for the "Encyclopedia of Chess Endgames" and according to the principles of systematizing the material, the endgame has been mentioned in several chapters. Kovacevic evaluates the initial position as drawn and the move 2... ♗a4? as the decisive mistake, while the move 2... ♗b7! as saving the game. In answer to 2... ♗b7 he looks at 3. ♗c5 and 3. ♗d6 proving the draw with some long lines. He includes in brackets the draw after the move suggested by Marianovic 3. ♗h5. The variation goes: 3. ♗h5 ♗b6! (3... ♗b1 4. d5 ♗g1

5.d6 ♖b7 6.d7 winning). 4.♙d7 ♖b7+ 5.♙c6 ♖c7+ 6.♙d6 ♖c1. Now, he terms the position a draw.

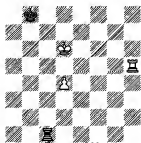


Diagram 366

Lets continue this analysis with only one move. After 7.♖b5+! – curtains! The continuation 7...♙a7 is hopeless because the king is cut off, as well as the king and pawn endgame 7...♙c8 8.♖c5+ ♖:c5 9.dc. So, where is the draw after all?

No 8

Uhlman – Gulko, Nikshic 1978

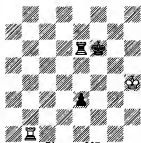


Diagram 367

1...♙f5?? This move presents White with a valuable tempo for the king. 1...e2! was winning after 2.♖e1 ♖e3! (the king is cut off) 3.♙g4 ♙e5. Now, the game should end in a draw. Gulko himself explains his move like this: "It was midnight – this was a night adjournment, and as usual it was time for

miracles. I forgot completely about one draw- position..."

2.♙g3 ♙e4 3.♙g2! After 3.♖b4+? ♙d3 4.♖b3+ ♙c2 Black wins – White lacks one file for successful checks from the side.

3...♖g6+. After 3...♖f6 with the idea to cut off the king, White gains space for his rook to become "long" with – 4.♖a1!, after which the black king and the white rook are separated by three files and the defence with checks from the side is sufficient to draw.

4. ♖f1 ♜f3 5. ♖b3?? White in his turn makes a fatal mistake. White forgets the simple drawing stunt 5. ♖b2 ♖a6 6. ♖f2+!

5... ♖a6 6. ♖b1 ♖h6 7. ♜g1 ♖g6+. White resigned.

№9

Tolush – Bondarevsky

Leningrad 1939



Diagram 368

1... ♖c7. White's task would have been easier after 1... e5 2. ♜b4 ♖c6 3. ♖h5 ♖e6 4. ♜c3 with a simple draw.

2. ♖h1. The white rook is on the start line for the attack "from in front". The king and pawn endgame is lost: 2. ♖:c7? ♜:c7 3. ♜b4 ♜d6 4. ♜c4 ♜e5 5. ♜d3 ♜f4.

2... ♜e7 3. ♜b6? This move creates additional difficulties on the way to the draw. 3. ♜b4! was leading to a theoretical position (but not 3. ♖e1? ♖b7 and the white king is cut off from the pawn by three files) 3... ♖c8 (3... e5 4. ♖h7+ ♜d6 5. ♖:c7 ♜:c7 6. ♜c5 and the pawn is lost) 4. ♖e1 ♜f6 5. ♖f1+ ♜g5 6. ♖e1 ♜f5 7. ♖f1+ ♜g4 8. ♖e1 ♖e8 9. ♜c3 e5 10. ♜d2 with a draw – here you can see the method of defence with attack from "in front" in its purest form.

3... ♖c3! If the king was on "b4", Black wouldn't have had this move. You remember the same situation in our example № 6. Tolush's move 3. ♜b6? is analogous to Kochiev's 13. ♜e2? 4. ♖e1? The decisive mistake. In this position the attack from "in front" is not sufficient to save the game. White had to play 4. ♜b5! ♜f6 (4... e5 5. ♖h6) 5. ♜b4 ♖e3 6. ♜c4 ♜e5 7. ♖h5+ (the defence with checks from the side) 7... ♜e4

8.♖h4+ ♜f3 9.♜d4 e5+ (9...♞e1 10.♞h3+) 10.♜d5 ♞e1 (10...e4 11.♜e5 and after 12.♞f4+ Black loses the pawn.) 11.♞h3+ ♜g4 12.♞h8 e4 13.♞f8 and White achieves a draw cutting off the enemy king from the pawn.

4...♜f6 5.♜b5. Now, the pawn will be pushed forward one square, but even against the attack from "in front" Black will have: 5.♞f1+ ♜g5 6.♞e1 ♜f5 7.♞f1+ ♜e4 8.♞e1+ ♞e3 and Black wins.

5...e5 6.♜b4 ♞c8. We have been talking about the "rule of five", and we have formulated it (look at example № 6), now lets make some use of it. The pawn is on the fourth rank, the king is cut off by two files: $4+2=6$ and that is more than 5. So, Black's position is winning.

7.♞f1+ ♜e6 8.♞e1 ♜f5. Black wins with the help of the combined method, termed as such by N. Grigoriev. The essence of this method is: **1.** The king of the stronger side is moved forward as far as possible; generally the king manages to occupy a square next to the pawn on the diagonal. **2.** The rook is placed behind the pawn and supports its movement forward.

9.♞f1+ ♜g4 10.♞e1 ♜f4 11.♞f1+ ♜g3 12.♞e1 ♞e8 13.♜c3 ♜f2! There was another solution: 13...♜f3 14.♞f1+ (14.♜d2 ♞d8+ and 15...e4) 14...♜e2 15.♞h1 ♞c8+ and 16...e4.

14.♞e4 ♜f3 15.♞h4 ♞d8! 16.♞h3+ ♜g4 17.♞h7 e4 18.♞f7 e3 19.♜c2 ♜g3 20.♞f6 e2 21.♞e6 ♜f2 22.♞f6+ ♜e1 23.♞a6. 23.♞f7 was offering a stiffer resistance. Black was winning with the help of a "shelter": 23...♞c8+ 24.♜b2 ♞c5.

23...♞f8. White resigned.

№10

Timoshchenko – Haritonov

Frunze 1988

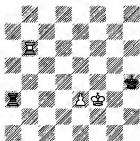


Diagram 369

1. ♖f4? It looks like White wins as he pleases, but this tempting move leads to a draw.

1... ♔h5. Now, the position is a draw, because the king has occupied the "short" side and the rook is placed on the "long" side and Black draws with the method of checks on the side.

2.e4 ♖a1! 3.e5 ♖f1+! 4. ♔e4

♔g5. Black has enough space now for the king. The rook goes back to the long side and the draw becomes inevitable.

5. ♔d5 (5. ♖a6 ♖b1 6. ♔d5 ♖b5+ 7. ♔d6 ♔f5 8.e6 ♔f6 9.e7 ♔f7 or 9. ♔d7 ♖b7+ with a draw) **5... ♖a1 6. ♔e6 ♖a7 7. ♖c6 ♔g6 8. ♖d6 ♔g5 9. ♖d5 ♔g6 10. ♖d7 ♖a6+ 11. ♖d6 ♖a7.** Draw.

Lets go back to the initial position. Now, **1. ♖f4?** doesn't win, does it? **1. ♖b5 ♖a1** leads to nothing. The only way to win is **1. ♖g6!** cutting off the king by two files from the pawn and after **1... ♔h5 2. ♖g2 ♖a8 3.e4 ♖f8+ 4. ♔e3 ♖e8 5. ♖g1!** we have a well familiar theoretical position.

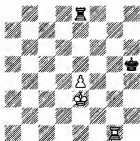


Diagram 370

R. Fine and A. Sheron had analysed this position independently at their time. Fine considered it to be a draw, which is not true, while Sheron proved the win. Black is in zugzwang. If **5... ♖e7**, the rook loses the necessary space for the successful attack from "in

front": 6.♖d4 ♖d7+ 7.♖c5 ♖e7 8.♖d5 ♖d7+ 9.♖e6. Fine thought that 5...♖h4 could draw, but Sheron pointed out that White wins with 6.e5! ♖:e5+ 7.♖f4!. After 5...♖h6 White wins with the same tactical motive: 6.♖f4 ♖f8+ 7.♖e5 ♖e8+ (otherwise 8.♖d6 ♖d8+ 9.♖e7) 8.♖f6!

It is interesting to observe that the position on the last diagram occurred in the game **Gulko – Balashov** (USSR Championship, 1977). Here is how the game proceeded: 5...♖h4 6.e5! ♖h5 7.♖e4 ♖h6 8.♖d5 ♖h7 9.e6 ♖d8+ 10.♖e5 ♖d2 11.e7 ♖e2+ 12.♖f6 ♖f2+ 13.♖e6 ♖e2+ 14.♖f7 ♖f2+ 15.♖e8 ♖d2 16.♖g4. Black resigned.

If we talk about the game Timoshchenko – Haritonov, we can make the conclusion that the reason for White's troubles was that Timoshchenko had forgotten a theoretical position and he made the wrong choice of the way to cut off the king, which had to be done along the file and not on the rank.

Positions with a Knight Pawn

№11

Spiridonov – Bareev **Budapest 1988**

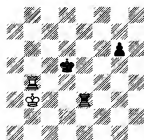


Diagram 371

1.♖c2 ♖e5 2.♖d2 ♖e4
3.♖b1! g5 4.♖e1?

The Bulgarian grandmaster misses the draw he could achieve with 4.♖d3! g4 5.♖b8! ♖f4 6.♖b5+! ♖f6 7.♖e3! ♖f3+ 8.♖e2 ♖g6 9.♖b1 and 10.♖f1 (Bareev).

4...g4 5.♖f1 g3 6.♖d3 ♖f4.
White resigned.

№12
Simagin – Tarasov
USSR 1957

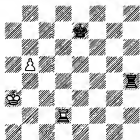


Diagram 372

In this position White can win with: 1. Bd3! Bg4 2. b6 Bg6 3. Bb3 Bg8 4. c4! c7 5. Bc3 Bc8 6. Bc5 c8 7. c5 , as well as with 3. b7 Ba6+ 4. c2! Bb6+ 5. Bb3 .

The events in the game followed the already habitual script. Mistakes were made for both sides and first White

missed the win and then Black missed the draw.

1. b6? Bh6! (1... Bh8? 2. c4 Bd8 3. B:d8 c:d8 4. c5 winning) **2. Bb2 Bh8? 3. b7** and Black resigned.

Meanwhile, the draw was quite near: 2... c7 (threatening 3... c8) 3. b7 Ba6+ 4. c3 Bb6+ 5. c3 B:b2 6. c2 c7 and Black takes the pawn.

№13

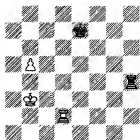


Diagram 373

This is a position from the book "The Theory of Rook Endgames" by Levenfish and Smyslov. The solution there : 1. c3! Bg4 2. b6 Bg6 3. Bb2 Bg8 4. b7 Bb8 5. c4 c7 6. c5 c7 7. c6 Bh8 8. c7 . In fact, all this is a repetition of the game Simagin – Tarasov with all the mistakes included at that.

As you see, in this excellent book, which was reedited three times you can find "reprints"...

Positions with a Rook Pawn

№14
Vizhmanavin – Lerner
Lvov 1984

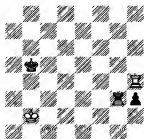


Diagram 374

This position arose after a tiring, continuous adjournment, in which White was defending excellently in a difficult position. It seemed that the opponents were about to agree to a draw, but Lerner was trying to find some additional chances.

1... ♖c5 2. ♖c2 ♖a3! (The last trap) **3. ♖d2?**

White was either too tired or over relaxed...? The only way to draw was **3. ♖b2!** After **3... ♖g3 4. ♖c2 ♖d5 5. ♖d2 ♖a3** (or **5... ♖e5 6. ♖e2 ♖f5 7. ♖f2**) **6. ♖e2 h2 7. ♖f2** The white king helped just in time.

3... h2 4. ♖e2 ♖a1. White resigned.

№15
Zuckertort – Steinitz
London 1872



Diagram 375

1. ♖h5 ♜e6 2. ♖a5+. This check was not necessary. It was simpler to play immediately:
2. ♖a1 ♖e4 3. ♖g5 ♖d4
 (3... ♜e5+ 4. ♖f6! ♜h5 5. ♖g6 wins the pawn) 4. ♖f5 ♜b6
 (4... ♜c6 5. ♜d1+ ♖e3 6. ♖e5) 5. ♖f4 ♖c3 6. ♖e4 ♖b2 7. ♖a5 ♖b3 8. ♖a1 with a draw.

2... ♖e4 3. ♖g5?? "When you have to die – do it quickly...". This must have been a "friendly" game. There were fourteen more years left, to their first match for the World Title.

3... ♜e5+. White resigned.

In the "Encyclopedia of Chess Endgames" this endgame was annotated by IM N. Minev. He puts a question mark to the move **2. ♖a5+** giving the following lines: **3. ♖a1** (instead of **3. ♖g5??**) **3... ♜e5+ 4. ♖g4 a5 5. ♖g3 (5. ♜e1+ ♖d4 6. ♜:e5 ♖:e5 7. ♖f3 ♖d4; 5. ♖a3 ♜d5 6. ♖a4+ ♖d3 7. ♖f3 ♜f5+ 8. ♖g4 ♜c5) 5... ♖d3 6. ♖f4 ♜c5 7. ♖f3 ♖c2 8. ♖e2 ♖b2 9. ♖a4 ♖b3 10. ♜h4 a4** and Black wins in all cases.

All this is understandable. But why should White make the suicidal move **3. ♖a1?**, which enables the black pawn to make the all-important step forward (**3... ♜e5+** and **4... a5**)? Why not the natural move **3. ♖g4**, after which it is not easy to see how Black can win, if at all? For example **3. ♖g4 ♜g6+ 4. ♖h5**, or **3... ♜b6 4. ♖a1**, or **3... ♖d4 4. ♖a1 ♖c3 5. ♖f5 ♜b6 6. ♖e4 ♖b2 7. ♖a5** with a draw just like in the line with **2. ♖a1**.

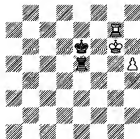
Nº16**Ksieski – Adamski
Championship of Poland, 1979**

Diagram 376

1. Bg8! This is a prophylactic measure against the rook checks "from behind". White wouldn't achieve anything with 1. B a7? B e1 2. h6 B g1+ 3. Q h7 Q f6 4. B g7 B h1.

1... Bf5. The only chance. 1... Q e7 was hopeless after 2. h6 B e1 3. h7 B g1+ 4. Q f5 and Black lacks a vital tempo for the

successful attack "from behind".

2. h6?? White turned out to be very naive. 2. B e8+! was winning. White was probably afraid that the king and pawn endgame was a draw after 2... Q d7 3. Q :f5? Q :e8 4. Q g6. White should not exchange the rooks. the Black king is cut away from the pawn by three files and White wins building a "shelter" with: 3. B e4 B f1 4. h6 B g1+ 5. Q h5 B h1+ 6. B h4.

2... Bf6+ Now the draw is unavoidable.

3. Qg7. Black would have some more difficulties in the line: 3. Q g5 B f5+ 4. Q g4 B f7 (4... B f1? 5. h7) 5. B g6+ Q e5! (after 5... B f6 6. Q g5 or 5... Q e7 6. B a6 B f1 7. h7 and White wins.) 6. B a6 B f1 with a draw.

3... Bf7+ 4. Qh8 Bf1 5. Bg7 Ba1 6. Qh7 Qf6. Draw.

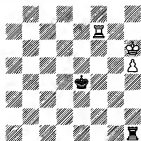
№17**Tzvetkov – Karaklaic****Match Sofia – Belgrade, 1956**

Diagram 377

Black missed the moment to change the method of defence in this example. He had to switch from attacking "from behind" into attacking from the side.

1. ♗g6. After **1. ♖f6 ♘e5**
2. ♖a6 ♘f5 it is impossible to improve the position.

1... ♗g1+ 2. ♗f6!? White is setting up a trap. It was useless to play **2. ♘h7 ♘e5 3. h6 ♘e6 4. ♖g7 ♖h1.**

2... ♖f1+. Presently Black did not fall in – **2... ♖h1? 3. ♖e7+ ♘f4 4. ♖e5** and White wins.

3. ♘e6 ♖h1? Now, the game is over. Black had to place his rook for checks along the rank: **3... ♖a1! 4. ♖f6** (or **4. ♖f2 ♖a5 5. ♖h2 ♖a6+** with a draw) **4... ♖a5 5. h6 ♖a7 6. ♖g6 ♘f4 7. ♘f6 ♖a6+ 8. ♘g7 ♖a7+ 9. ♘h8 ♘f5** and the white king fails to run away from the corner.

4. ♖f5 ♖a1 5. ♘f6 ♖a8 6. ♖e5+ ♘f4 7. h6 ♖h8 8. ♖h5 ♖a8 9. h7. Black resigned.

The events in the next two examples are characterized by the wrong application of the method of attack from "in front", instead of attacking "from behind".



Diagram 378

This endgame arose after Vladimirov defended perfectly a complicated rook endgame with a lot of pawns for more than thirty moves. He was not destined however to reap the fruits of his hard labour.

1...Be3 2. d2 Be7 3. Bc3?

White had to play 3. Bg8+ e5
4. Bf8+ e4 5. Bg8+ e3 6. Bg5!

with the idea to obtain this position: White – d2, Bg8; Black – e2, Be7, p. p.h3. In this familiar theoretical position the draw is inevitable, since the white king is cut off by three files, which is insufficient to win (four are necessary).

3...h4.

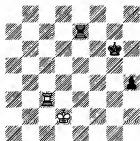


Diagram 379

4. Be3? The decisive mistake. White could have still drawn with: 4. Bc6+ e5 5. Bc8! Bh7 6. Bg8+. White misjudged the position and instead of attacking "from behind", he decided to attack from "in front".

4...Bh7! 5. Be1. The white king fails to perform his task in

the line 5. Bh3 e5 6. e2 e4 7. Bh1 h3 and later just as in the game.

5...h3 6. Bh1 e5 7. e3 e4 8. e2. If 8. Bg1+ e4 9. Bh1, Black plays 9...Ba7 followed by Ba2, h2, e3.

8...♖f7+ 9.♗g1 ♘a7. Now, White could have set the last trap: 10.♘h2 ♗g3?? 11.♙g2+! (remember the game Uhlman – Gulko). Vladimirov resigned, quite reasonably, because he supposed that his opponent will force him in zugzwang with 10...♙a1+ 11.♗f2 ♘b1.

№19

Dvoiris – Kovalev

Simferopol 1988

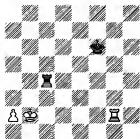


Diagram 380

1.♗b3 ♘e4. There was another way to reach the draw even simpler: 1...♙c6! 2.a4 (2.♙e2 ♘e6) 2...♗e7 3.♙d2! and now Black can choose between the line with the king in the corner after 3...♙d6 4.♙a2 ♗d7 5.a5 ♗c8 6.a6 ♗b8, or the attack "from behind" – 3...♙h6 4.a5 ♙h3+ 5.♗b4 ♙h1 with the

idea to go into the already familiar, after the previous example, position: White – ♗a7, ♙d2, p.p.a6; Black – ♗e7, ♙b1.

The game Dvoiris – Kovalev was annotated by IM I. Glek in the informative book "Chess in USSR", January – March 1989. He puts a question mark to the move 1...♙e4, considering it to be the decisive mistake. It is soon going to become clear to you that the commentator has been misled.

2.a4 ♗e7 3.♙d2. Glek puts a mark now "White has a decisive advantage". In fact the position is a draw!

3...♙e6? 3...♙e3+ is simpler – 4.♗b4 ♙e4+ 5.♗b5 ♙e1.

4.a5.

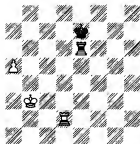


Diagram 381

4...Bd6?? This is like a reflection in the mirror of the game Vladimirov – Rashkovsky with quite the same mistake. 4...Bb3+ 5.♖b4 Bb1 6.a6 Bb1 7.♖b5 Bb1+ was still drawing. We must mention that 4...Bd6 was sealed.

5.Ba2! Ba6 6.♖b4 ♖d7 7.♖b5 Ba8 8.a6 ♖c7 9.Bc2+

♖d7. As for 9...♖b8 10.Bh2 – look at the previous example.

10.Bh2 Bb8+ 11.♗a5 Bb1 11...Ba8 12.Bh7+ followed by a7 and ♗a6.

12.a7 Ba1+ 13.♖b6 Bb1+ 14.♖c5 Bc1+ 15.♖b4 Bc8 15...Ba1 Bh8!; 15...Bb1+ 16.♗a3 Ba1+ 17.Ba2.

16.Bd2+ and Black resigned because of the line: 16...♗e7 17.Ba2 Ba8 18.♖b5 ♖d7 19.♖b6.

№20

Chiburdanidze – Levitina, Volgograd 1984



Diagram 382

We need to tell you something here. This game was played in a World Championship Match and was adjourned in a complicated endgame with an advantage for Black. Our analysis reached the diagrammed position. One of the authors of this article was coaching I. Levitina in this

match in Volgograd and showed the draw. The only way to reach it for White was to play 1.Bb8!

Now we have the following variations:

• 1...♖e3 2.♗f4 ♘e7 3.♞b3 ♘c5 4.♞e3! ♘a7 5.♗e4 ♘c4
6.♞a3 a5 7.♗e3 ♘b4 8.♞a1 ♘b3 9.♘d2 a4 10.♞b1+!

• 1...♘c5 2.♞c8+ ♘b4 3.♞b8+ ♘a4 4.♗f4 a5 5.♗e4 ♞b3
6.♞a8 ♘b4 7.♘d4 a4 8.♞b8+ ♘a3 9.♞a8.

• 1...♘c7 2.♞b1 a5 3.♗f4 ♘c6 4.♗e4 ♘c5 5.♞a1 ♘b4
6.♘d4 ♞h3 7.♞b1+ ♞b3 8.♞g1 a4 9.♞g8 ♞b2 (9...♞h3 10.♞b8+
♘a3 11.♘c4) 10.♞b8+ ♘a3 11.♞a8 ♘b3 (11...♞c2 12.♘d3
and ♞b8 next) 12.♘d3! (but not 12.♞b8+? ♘c2 13.♞a8 ♞b4+
14.♘c5 ♘b3 and Black wins) 12...a3 13.♞b8+ ♘a2 14.♞a8
with a draw in all the lines.

We failed to improve Black's play at the end of our analysis of variations which lasted for 19 moves and led to positions from the endgame "rook and pawn against rook", after the adjourned position. We had to wait whether the coaching brigade of the World Champion would find the move 1.♞b8! or not.

M. Chiburdanidze played very quickly the rook endgame at the adjournment, but our fears turned out to be unfounded when in the diagrammed position she played -1.♞b1?

Now, in comparison with the line 1.♞b8! ♘c7 2.♞b1 a5 – White fails to draw, because of the lack of a single tempo.

1...a5 2.♗f4 a4 3.♗e4 ♘c5 4.♞b8 a3 5.♞a8 ♘c4 6.♞a7 ♘b3 7.♞a8 ♞h3 8.♞b8+ ♘c2. White resigned.

Evidently the World Champion and her coaches considered the endgame to be hopeless and failed to grasp the fine points. The same mistake was repeated by all the commentators of this game, which considered White's loss in this rook endgame regular. For example master N. Popov wrote: "The white king is cut off on the third rank and fails to take part in the action." ("Shakhmati in USSR" № 12, 1984.) Master Y. Kotkov imitates him with: "This rook endgame is theoretically won for Black" and a little further "...unfortunately,

the white king has to remain a mute witness" ("64" № 21, 1984). They do not submit any variations. Only recently in the book "People and Chess" by V. Zak and Y. Dlugolensky, the author pointed out that the move 1.♖b8! was evidently leading to a draw, but they did not support their thesis with any concrete lines.

№21

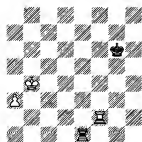


Diagram 383

This example has been taken from the book "The Theory of Rook Endgames" by Levenfish and Smyslov. The position is considered to be winning for White. The authors of the book write: "Now, the attack from "in front" fails – 1...♖b1+ 2.♔a5 ♖b8 3.a4 ♖a8+ 4.♔b5 ♖b8+ 5.♔c6 ♖a8 6.♖a2 ♔f6 7.a5 ♔e7

8.a6. If 2...♖b3 White gradually goes with the king to a8, pushes the pawn to a7 – winning...".

What about the attack from the side? 1...♖e4+!? 2.♔b5 (2.♔b3 ♖e3+ 3.♔a2 ♖e4) 2...♖e5+ 3.♔c6 ♖e6+ 4.♔d5 ♖a6 5.♖a2 (5.♖f3 ♖a8 drawing with the method of attacks from "in front").

The critical position. 5...♖a4 loses now after 6.♔c5 ♔f6 7.♔b5 ♖a8 8.a4 ♔e7 9.♔c6 ♖a6+ 10.♔b7 ♖a5 11.♔b6 ♖a8 12.a5 ♔d7 13.♔b7.

The black king manages to reach the corner after 5...♔f6, although this may seem unbelievable. If 6.a4 ♔e7 7.a5 ♔d7, and if 6.♔c5 ♔e7 7.♔b5 ♖h6 8.a4 ♔d7 9.♖c2 ♖h8 and Black plays next ♖c8 and draws easily.

So, the position on the last diagram is evidently a draw.

It is time to make some conclusions.

You have to pay attention to the fact that even chess players with an extra-class tend to make mistakes in endgames of this type. Why? We think that the reasons are:

I) In positions like this a lot of exact knowledge is necessary. Nowadays most of the people work on the studying of the opening and the middle-game, which are closely connected and only a few players take endgame books in their hands. Plenty of exact positions are completely unfamiliar even to grandmasters. We often meet the following situation: the chess player knows some theoretical position, but after a long lasting fight, he gets tired and fails to connect his abstract knowledge with the position on the board.

In most of our examples the insufficient knowledge caused the abundance of mistakes and the most characteristic examples were the endgames: Pekker – Ermolinsky, Uhlman – Gulko, Timoshchenko – Haritonov, Vladimirov – Rashkovsky and Dvoiris – Kovalev.

II) The chess players often try to replace the exact knowledge and some typical endgame methods with the calculation of variations. Usually after 6 hours of playing (and not only then) this ends in a failure. A lot of grandmasters tend to make mistakes in their calculations, even such players who are considered to be excellent "calculators" (Sax – Tzeshkovsky, Huebner – Timman, Uhlman – Gulko etc.).

III) People often make a mess of the right method of defence and instead of the right one, they use the wrong one. This phenomenon is well illustrated by the examples: Tolush – Bondarevsky, Tzvetkov – Karaklaic, Vladimirov – Rashkovsky, Dvoiris – Kovalev and example №21.

IV) The stronger side also makes mistakes in the method of playing to win. For example the cutting off along the rank of the opponent's king, instead of along the file, resulted in the loss of half a point in the game Timoshchenko – Haritonov.

V) Finally we have to remind you once again about something. Whenever, the board is left with only a few pieces on it, that means that a lot of fight has preceded this situation. Consequently, the probability of eventual mistakes increases considerably. Almost all of our examples confirmed this observation. The most illustrative examples were after all: Uhlman – Gulko, Vizhmanavin – Lerner and Zuckertort – Steinitz.

The reader possibly noticed the phrase at the beginning of the chapter: "To be able to learn to play the endgame well you have to try to play endgames as often as possible". The chess player should try indeed to reach endgames very often to be able to master them well, since only studying would hardly help. In order to achieve this you must sometimes go into a conflict with your own fantasy and temper. I am not trying to "dry" your style. If your game start to show an excess of a too rational approach, the coach should be able to notice this and help the pupil to preserve the active style of playing. My experience as a coach shows that the patient work on the compromising of the enemy position and the process of acquiring small advantages in the endgame, seems to the young player a little bit dull and boring and the problem for the coach is to develop in the young player a certain interest and taste for it. Most often you find uninteresting things that you don't understand, while true beauty is approachable only to the expert, while it usually causes only amazement and frustration to the layman. To illustrate this, I will give you an example from the book "Endgame Strategy". I like this example very much but I will supply thorough explanations, since without them you will hardly be able to grasp the inner beauty of this wonderful endgame.

Larsen – Marianovic
Bled – Portorozh, 1979



Diagram 384

The position on the diagram looks like an easy draw. The Danish grandmaster won convincingly because he applied craftily the principle "Do not hurry". **1. ♖e3 ♜bb7?!?** Larsen annotated this game in the "Chess Informant" № 27 and wrote that the right move was **1... ♜b5!** Marianovic evidently

thought that he was going to draw the way he pleased, so he didn't think profoundly about the fine points of this position. Indeed, it looks like Black is not threatened with anything. Had the Yugoslav grandmaster tried to anticipate his opponents plan to win, he might have been able to manage to prevent it.

2. ♜e4 ♜e7? Black's first move was not the best, although acceptable, but the second move is a clear mistake. To get some chances to win White should try at first to weaken the enemy position. The pawns on f7 and h7 are unapproachable. There remains the "g6" square. Black's pawn there is protected twice and if White wants to attack it he should provoke first the movement of the "f" or the "h" pawn. Black could have prevented White's idea with the move **2... ♜b5**.

3. ♜h4! h6 4. ♖f3. Now we know what White is after. Larsen intends to push the "h" pawn to h5 and attack the king-side of the opponent. White's advantage, as before, is so minute that it can lead to success, only if Black helps somehow, or does not resist at all. Therefore Larsen disguises his plan and starts to camouflage the moves that are part of his plan in a mass of seemingly innocuous and senseless actions.

4... Bb1+ 5. Kg2 Bb2 6. Qc4 Bbe2 7. Qcd2 Ed7 8. Qb3
 Bde7 9. Ba4 Bb2 10. Qbd2 Beb7 11. h3! This pawn intends to
 go to h5, but White avoids to push it twice not "to frighten the
 opponent". 11... B2b4 12. Ba5 B7b5 13. Ba3 Ed5 14. Ba7 . I am
 seriously appealing to the reader not to fall asleep, because
 that was exactly what the Danish grandmaster was after – to
 set Marianovitch napping.

14... Bdb5 15. h4 Bb7 16. Ba6 B7b6 17. Ba3 B6b5 18. Ed3
 Kh7 .



Diagram 385

19. Qg1! Larsen evidently
 decided that the period of
 stuffing the opponent has been
 finished successfully and it was
 time for action. Marianovic was
 probably bored with the
 evidently senseless White's
 manoeuvres and he missed to
 feel the important change in the
 course of actions, continuing to

move carelessly with his rook all over the board, while the
 white knight begins to approach the critical "h5" square.

19... Qg7 20. Qe2 Ba5 21. Qf4 Bba4 22. Qb3 Ba7 .



Diagram 386

23. Ed5 . Larsen seems to feel
 perfectly the disposition and
 psychology of his opponents.
 He decides to postpone the
 move with the "h" pawn and
 realized it in the most
 favourable moment. At the
 same time, Black could have
 played 23...h5! himself and the
 thorough preparation of White

would have been in vain. Larsen would have to start to look for some opportunities to try to win with the advance of the “f” pawn. In fact, White had to play 23.h5! although it wouldn't be easy at all after 23...♖a3 threatening to exchange the rooks with 24...♖b7. The best line for White would be 24.hg fg (24...♖b7 25.♗c5 ♖:d3 26.♗f:d3) 25.♗e6+ and 26.♗ec5. The winners should be admired and not criticized, though.

23...♖4a6? The decisive mistake. As I mentioned before, Black had to play 23...h5. **24.h5!** Black is lost now. White has a strong attack on the king-side. **24...♗h7 25.♗d4 ♗g7 26.♗b5 ♖b7.** White threatens 27.♖d8 followed by ♗b5 – d6 – e8+. **27.♗d6 ♖bb6?!** Now comes the final attack, but even the best 27...♖e7 wouldn't have saved Black. Larsen gives the following line 27...♖e7 28.♗c4 ♖c7 29.♗e3 ♖ca7 30.♖d8 ♖a8 (♗e3 – c4 – d6 was the threat) 31.♖d7 ♖6a7 32.♗e6+ ♗g8 33.♗c7 ♖c8 34.♗ed5 with a decisive advantage for White. **28.♗e8+ ♗f8 29.♗c7! ♖a7 30.♖d8+ ♗e7 31.♖g8! ♖c6 32.♗cd5+ ♗d6 33.hg fg 34.♗b4 ♖b6 35.♗fd5 ♖bb7 36.♖:g6+ ♗c5 37.♖:h6 ♖f7 38.♖c6+ ♗b5 39.♖c2 ♖ad7 40.g4** Black resigned.

If you apply well the principle “Do not hurry” you can not only disguise your plan, but change the course of the game favourably in the most suitable moment. To illustrate this we are going to see the game of my pupil Andrey Kovalev, who recently fulfilled all the necessary conditions to be awarded the title of International Grandmaster.

**Kovalev – Vaiser
Paris 1991**

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♗c3 ♗f6 4.♗g5 ♖b4 5.e5 h6 6.♗d2 ♗:c3 7.bc ♗e4 8.♖g4 g6 9.♗d3 ♗:d2 10.♗:d2 c5 11.h4 ♗c6 12.♖f4 ♗d7 13.♗f3 ♖e7 14.h5 g5 15.♖f6 ♖:f6 16.ef c4 17.♗f1 0-0-0. The opponents played the MacKetchon

variation of the French defence. White chose the most precise order of moves connected with 11.h4 12.♖f4. The strategical idea for White in this line comprises in the manoeuvre dc followed by ♖g1 – f3 – d4 – b5 and ♖f4 next. White should force the enemy knight to c6 to be able to succeed with his plan. With 11.h4 White created the threat 12.h5 g5 13.f4 and Black responded to this logically with some pressure in the centre playing 11...♗c6, but the sharp line 11...♙d7 12.h5 g5 13.f4 ♖a5 14.fg ♗c6 15.g6 0-0-0 deserved attention. The next moves of the opponents are a logical consequence of the previous ones and the game soon went into an endgame favourable for White.



Diagram 387

18.♖e1 ♗c7 19.♗e5. White exchanges the active knight of the opponent and gains time to prepare a king-side breakthrough at ease. I will not agree with this decision without any criticism and the same applies to the move 14.h5. Black has been deprived from space and his job to place his

pieces favourably will be easier after the exchange of every piece. White could try to bring the knight on g4, although he would have to consider the counterplay b7 – b5 – b4 then.

19...♗e5 20.♖:e5 b5 21.♙e2 ♗d6 22.g4?! Kovalev did not have to hurry with this move. The possibilities of White to make a breakthrough on a very narrow sector of the board, connected with f2 – f4 are smaller now. The attack of the g5 pawn becomes possible only by the rook from the "e5" square on the fifth rank.

22...♖b8 23.a3 a5 24.♖b1 ♙c6 25.♗e3.



Diagram 388

25...♙d7 26.f4 gf+? A.

Vaiser chooses the wrong line of defence. Black is playing for a draw, so he didn't have to open the position voluntarily. Moreover, Black could have blocked the position on the queen-side with 25...a4, although there was not any particular necessity to play this

move, because for White to play a3 – a4 would be to play not to win, but to lose. Instead of 26...♖bg8! How can White improve his position now? The exchange 27.fg hg brings him nothing, because of 28...♖h6. If White plays 27.♖h1 with the idea to push forward the "h" pawn, after the exchange on "g5" Black is going to answer with 27...♖h7 and once again 28.fg hg 29.h6 does not promise anything after 29...♖g6. Because of that White will have to try f4 – f5, for example 26...♖bg8 27.♖h1 ♖h7 28.f5 a4 29.♖f1 ♖d8 30.fe ♙:e6 and White has no real threats on the king-side, even if we suppose that he can manage to put his rooks on e5 and f5 and the bishop on g2.

27. ♙:f4 ♙c6 28. ♙g3 ♙d7 29. ♙h4 ♙c6. White can rely to be successful only after the breakthrough g4 – g5. Black will have two lines for defence then: to build a sound defence on the king-side, or try a counter- attack with b5 – b4. If White tries the direct approach with 30., g5, after 30...hg+ 31.♖:g5 ♖h6 32.♖f1 ♖bh8 33.♖g7 ♙e8 Black is defending safely. White can try instead of 32.♖f1, 32.♖bg1 ♖:f6 33.♖g8 ♖:g8, but after 34...b4!? 35.ab ab 36.cb ♙a4 the position seems to me rather unclear. If White plays 30.♖f1 beforehand, Black can start a counter-attack with 30...b4 31.ab ab 32.cb ♖:b4 and 33...c3 next. Therefore Kovalev begins some bishop manoeuvres to be able to find the most favourable situation to

try one of the plans for an active play. This tactics is rather unpleasant for Black. Vaiser should watch carefully about his every move.

30.♙f3! ♜d7 31.♙d1 ♜c6 32.♙e2 ♜d7?! Black continues to move with his bishop naively, without suspecting anything and helps his opponent. **32...♞h7** was preferable. **33.♞f1! b4.** When the black bishop is on d7 this breakthrough is not so effective anymore. Maybe Black had better play **33...♞bf8**, to be able to meet **34.g5 hg+** **35.♞:g5 ♞h6 37.♞g7** with the retreat **36...♙e8**. **34.ab ab 35.cb ♞:b4 36.♞a1!** Now, the idea of the manoeuvre with the white bishop becomes clear – **36...c3** will be answered with **37.♞a6+** and **38.♞e3** next. **36...♙c6 37.♞e3 ♞g8 38.♞a7 ♙b7 39.♞e5.** White managed to open a second front. Black's task is very hard now. **39...♞b1 40.♙f3 ♜c6?!** It would have been better to retreat with the rook to h8, but Black was in a time-trouble.

41.g5 ♞f1 42.♞a3 ♙d6 43.♙g4 hg+ 44.♞:g5 ♞h8.



Diagram 389

It looks like Black had been frightened, but far from beaten. The white pawn on f6 is hanging, and the passed pawn on h5 is presently blocked. White's next move, however, clarifies the picture.

45.♞f3! Tactics! Now, in case of **45...♞:f3 46.♙:f3 ♞h6** White wins with the beautiful stroke **47.♞g6!! fg 48.♙g5. 45...♞h1+ 46.♙h3 ♙c6 47.♞g7 e5!?** The counter-attack of desperation. If Black plays passively, White will slowly but surely push his passed pawn to promotion. Now, we shall witness spectacular complications ending in a win for White.

48.de+ ♖:e5 49.♖:f7 d4 50.♖e7+ ♖d6 51.♖e6+ ♖c7
 52.♖g3 d3 53.cd c3 54.d4 c2 55.♖c3 ♖:h5+ 56.♖g4! A
 picturesque position. The game is practically over and there
 only followed: 56...♖5:h3 57.♖e:c6+ ♖d7 58.♖c7+ ♖c6
 59.♖7c6+ ♖f7 60.♖:h3 c1♖ 61.♖:c1 ♖:c1 62.♖f5. Black
 resigned.

My advice: *"Try to perfect your endgame technique from the beginning of your chess studies"* is not so easy to follow. My practice as a coach shows that the chess player learns some opening schemes and then puts lots of efforts in the process of the transition between the opening and the middle game and doesn't even think about the endgame. He doesn't have to be forced, though. After some time, in an year or two, his results will improve and he will have a good understanding of the problems of the opening and the middle game. It will be much more difficult to evaluate his progress in the endgame, because the number of his games in which the endgame turned out to be decisive would still be relatively low. At the same time, after his studying of the classics, his chess culture will enlarge substantially and he will acquire an individual style of playing. He will form the habit to obtain a well known scheme and to follow familiar paths. This wish is sensible and easily understandable. The point is that with his improvement the class of his opponents will become higher as well and his familiar paths will become rather narrow. All these processes appear at the level of the practical strength of International Master. At that particular moment he will reach a dead end in some opening lines, which will lead him to some early draws in completely equal positions, so his improvement is likely to stagnate. In this case he should better play in several tournaments in a row, which are not so important as qualifications, results etc. In these tournaments he should try to accentuate not so much on the opening stage, but on the endgame. He should be striving for endgames and form the

habit to play for a win in the endgame until "bare kings" are left on the board.

To illustrate what I have been talking about, it is easy for me to show you some examples from my own games.

Shereshevsky – Zelkind

Minsk 1978

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗f3 g6 3.♙f4 ♘g7 4.e3 d6 5.♘c3. The White player has always a great choice how to start the game. To play ♘c3 in front of the "c" pawn can be easily criticized or justified, but that is not the point. The idea of this strange move is to lead the game into unfamiliar paths and afterwards, in the middle game to fight for initiative. **5...0-0 6.♙c4.** The same tactics as before. White intends after 6...c5 to play 7.dc dc 8.♙:d8 ♖:d8 9.♗e5 e6 10.♙e2 and 11.♙f3 next.

6...c6 7.a4 ♗b6 8.♗d2 ♙f5. The "b2" pawn is poisoned. If 8...♙:b2? 9.♖b1 ♙a3 10. 0-0 the black queen will be trapped. The development of the black bishop to f5 has its drawbacks, but is still acceptable. Presently, White can not use the lack of harmony in Black's development (♙f5 and pawn on g6). Still 8...a5 seemed to be safer.

9. 0-0 ♘bd7. 9...♙:b2? is impossible as before due to 10.♙b3.



Diagram 390

The opening is over. The position is about equal.

10.♘h4. White tries to do something to disrupt the calm development of the game. 10.a5 deserves attention. **10...♙e6 11.♙e2.** The exchange on e6 was not so favourable for White. Now,

12.e4 is the threat. **11...♟d5 12.♞:d5 cd 13.a5 ♘c7 14.♞f3.** Finally, there is no more pawn symmetry, so White has some initiative.

14...h6 White threatened 15.♞g5. **15.♞fc1 ♞fc8 16.a6!** This move is supposed to be the fundament of the future win.

16...ba 17.♞:a6 ♞cb8 18.b3 ♞f6 19.♞a5! ♞b6 20.♞a3!? 20.h3 would have been consequent in the spirit of the previous moves. I didn't see any necessity to care about the dark square bishop – the only white piece of small importance. Moreover, the exchange of the bishop for the good knight of the opponent is favourable for White, so I decided to provoke it. If 20.h3 ♞e4 comes, with an eventual pawn advance of the black pawns on the king-side.

20...♞h5?! E. Zelkind did not withstand the temptation and attacked the bishop with his knight at the edge of the board. **27...♞e4** would have been much more sensible.

21.♞g3 f5 22.♞ca1 g5?! This activity is absolutely illusory. It seems to Black, he is seizing the initiative, while the text move leads to a rather unpleasant endgame. **22...♞f7** was sensible, retreating with the bishop against **23.♞:b6 ab?** **24.♞c8** and preparing e7 – e5. White should probably play **23.♞e2**, which can be met with **23...♞c6** with an interesting position. Now Black is getting worse.

23.♞:b6! ♞:b6 24.♞d3 ♞b7. The complications after **24...f4 25.ef g4 26.♞h4 ♞:d4 27.♞:a7** favoured White. **25.h3!**



Diagram 391

25...♞g3? Until now, Black more or less managed to solve his problems successfully, but now he makes a grave positional blunder in the solution of the problem of the exchange. I don't think this mistake was occasional. Black had to solve throughout the whole game rather

non-typical tasks and the contours of the King's Indian defence were rather non-applicable to rely on. Secondly, the image of the dark square bishop (fellow Indians – forgive me) happens to be holy for the majority of the King's Indian players. Besides Black was in a time-trouble then.

26.fg Bc7?! 27.Ba5! Qf6 28.Bf1! This was a rather unpleasant surprise for Black, since now his pawns of f5 and d5 become very weak, together with the a7 pawn.

28...Bf8 29.b4 f4? Zelkind is getting more and more nervous with the development of the events in the game. White's threat to push the pawn to b5 and double the rooks on the "a" file was unpleasant, but Black could have defended successfully. **29...Bb8 30.b5 Qd7** was a must with chances for a stubborn resistance.

30.gf gf 31.ef Qg7 32.Ee1 Qf5 33.g3! After this strong move, it becomes clear that Black's tactical operation has failed completely. Now, the game enters the stage of White's realization of his extra pawn.

33...Q:h3 34.B:d5 Bb8 35.b5 Qc8 36.Qf2 Qb7 37.Bh5 Bf8 38.Be2 Qc8 39.f5 Qb7 40.Qe3 Qc8 41.Qd2 Qb7 42.Be3 Qf6 43.B:h6 Q:f3 44.Bg6+ Qf7 45.B:f3 Q:d4 46.Qe4. Black is suffering in this endgame not so much due to the small White's material advantage, but much more because White has a great positional advantage – with rooks and bishops of opposite colours.

46...Bh8 47.Qd5+ Qf8 48.c4 Qg7 49.Ba3! Qd4. 50.b6 was the threat. **50.Qd3 Qb6 51.Ba1 Bc5 52.Be1 Qd8 53.Be4.** The white rook is going to g4 with a mating attack. Black resigned.

Shereshevsky – Sarbai

Minsk 1978

1.d4 Qf6 2.Qf3 d5 3.e3. I have already told you that achieving an opening advantage was far from White's mind.

3...g6 4.♘d3 ♘g7 5. 0-0 0-0 6.c3 ♖c6! Black plays the opening energetically, preparing e7 – e5 with an initiative. 7.b4 This move is very risky, since after e7 – e5 the scope of the black bishop on g7 is increased. The position after 7.♖bd2 e5 8.♗:e5 ♗:e5 9.de ♗g4 10.♗f3 ♗:e5 wouldn't be favourable for White either. 7...a6 8.♖bd2 e5! 9.b5.



Diagram 392

Black played the opening very well and has the better position. He had to play simply 9...ab 10.♗:b5 e4 11.♗e1 ♗e7 with a strong pressure on the king-side with excellent chances to punish the opponent for his treatment of the opening. Instead of this Black started some tactical operations, which

still gave him a good position, but the White's task was simplified.

9...♗:d4?! 10.cd e4 11.♗e2 ef 12.♗:f3 ab 13.♗:b5 ♗e4 14.♗b2 c5! 15.a4. White parries the eventual ♗d8-b6. 15...♗g4! 16.♗e1 cd?! A. Sarbai makes a crucial omission, allowing White to free himself and coordinate his pieces at the coast of a small compromising of the pawn structure on the king-side. He had to play 16...♗f6 17.♗e2 c4 (Black might have some better moves here), preserving the positional pressure.

17.♗:d4 ♗:d4 Black wouldn't have anything substantial after 17...♗c3. This move would lead to an approximate equality after 18.♗d3 ♗:b5 19.ab ♗:f3 20.gf, but Black was evidently trying to achieve much more than that.

18.♗:d4 ♗f3 19.gf ♗g5+ 20.♗f1 ♗f6. It would be more logical to retreat with the knight to d6, but Black avoids the exchange of the minor pieces, having still the idea to play for

a big advantage. I didn't intend at all to play for a draw in this game, because I thought, the necessity to play defensively sometimes was part of the objective reality and comprised one more way to play for a win.

21.♠d3. It was time to show some of the trump-cards. Black's pawn on b7 is weak and White intends to attack it on the "b" file. Objectively the position is still equal, but White has now the psychological initiative. I had one and a half hour for the last twenty moves, while my opponent had only twenty five minutes.

21...♠d7 22.♖eb1 ♖h5 23.♖g4! Time to go into an endgame!

23...♖:g4 24.fg ♘c5 25.♠b5.



Diagram 393

White's position is a little better now, but still after a proper defence by Black the game must end in a draw. I intended to fight however until "bare kings" were left.

25...♖a5 26.♖b4 ♖a8 27.g5.

It would be useful to create some prerequisites for an active play on the king-side.

27...♘e4 28.h4 ♘c3 29.♠d7 b5 30.♖a3 ♖:a4. Black had better take this pawn with the knight, but his intention to simplify the position in the time-trouble was reasonable and understandable.

31.♖b:a4 ♘:a4 32.♠c6! A strong move. I intended to meet 32...♖a5 with 33.♖a1 winning Black's "d" pawn. 32.♠:b5 wouldn't yield anything after 32...♘b6. **32...♖d8 33.♠:b5 ♘c5 34.♖a7 ♘e6.** In this moment I asked myself the following question: "What are my chances to win against not so proper

playing by my opponent?". I failed to find an answer, but Sarbai managed to.

35. ♖e2 d4? All kinds of actions can be good as well as bad. The drawbacks of the last move were evident and that showed that Black's spirit was rather low at that time, due to the time-trouble.

36. e4 ♖b8? This was another impulsive decision, which led Black to grave difficulties now. Black had played 35...d4 and now had to continue with 36...d3+ 37. ♗d2 ♜d4. White has the choice between 38. ♗:d3 ♜c6 39. ♖a3 with a better rook-endgame, but still drawish and 38. ♗c4!? ♜f3+ 39. ♗d1 while now Black has no choice anymore.

37. ♗c4 ♖b2+ 38. ♗f3 ♖c2 39. ♗:e6! fe 40. ♖d7 ♖c3+ 41. ♗g4 ♖c4 42. f3 ♖a4. This rook-endgame is very difficult for Black now. The pawn on "e6" is weak and does not allow Black to go into an endgame with four white pawns against three black on the king-side. Anyway, Black had to try even on the previous move to adjourn the game and try to save it with some active counterplay. Instead of this, my opponent continues to play defensively, allowing me to improve my position.

43. h5! gh 44. ♗:h5 ♖b4 45. g6! Now, I felt that my position was winning and asked for an envelope. The sealed move by White leaves Black with no chances to save the game. **45...hg+ 46. ♗:g6 ♖b8 47. ♖:d4 e5 48. ♖d7 ♖e8 48. ♖g7+ ♗f8 50. ♗f6 ♖b8 51. ♖a7 ♖e8 52. ♖a5 ♗g8 53. ♖:e5 ♖f8+ 54. ♗e6 ♖:f3 55. ♖g5+!** Black can not play now 55...♗f8, because of 56. ♖f5+ and after the retreat of the black king to the "h" file, White wins by means of the well familiar "shelter" for the king. There still followed: **55... ♗h7 56. e5 ♖a3 57. ♗f6 ♖a5 58. ♖g1 ♖a2 59. e6 ♖f2+ 60. ♗e7 ♖e2 61. ♗f7 ♖f2+ 62. ♗e8 ♖e2 63. e7 ♗h6 64. ♖d1 ♖a2 65. ♗d7.** Black resigned.

Shereshevsky – Kagan
Minsk 1978

1.d4 e6 2.c4 b6 3.♘c3 ♗b7 4.a3. This put an end to the theoretical dispute. White decides to avoid the principled move 4.e4 and prefers some calm development.

4...f5 5.d5 ♘f6.



Diagram 394

White can force now the exchange of the queens with 6.de de 7.♙:d8+ ♚:d8, but Black develops his pieces easily with 8...♗d6 and 9...♛e7 with a good play.

6.♘f3 ♗e7 7.de!? **de**
8.♙:d8+ ♗:d8?! Black made this move in a flash. Meanwhile 8...♛d8 deserved some

attention with the idea to reach the aforementioned disposition of pieces, since the cavalry attack with 9.♘g5 was fruitless.

9.♗f4 ♘c6 10.h3 h6? Black is losing time with this strange move.

11.e3 0-0 12.♗e2 ♗e8 13. 0-0-0. Black's position is not comfortable at all. His main problem is the lack of coordination between the pieces of the different sides, due to the misplaced bishop on d8 and the weakness of the central "e5" square.

13...e5?! After this move Black's central position becomes even more vulnerable. Black had better play defensively with: a6, ♖c8, and ♗e7 trying to neutralize the initiative of the opponent gradually.

14.♗h2 g5? This is a force activity with the idea as if to frighten the opponent.

understand the chess game much better and when he starts to play in the normal contemporary way, he will be much more self-conscious with capabilities for a new approach to the majority of the problems of the opening and the middle game.

How to Analyse and Comment Your Own Games

I think that to be able to analyse and objectively comment your games is a very important condition for work in the methods of improvement we are discussing. This enables the young player to show his personal characteristics better, acquire an individual style and master creatively the elements of the chess culture. In fact, the main drawback of this methods is that the chess player who works following it has only just a little left to reach in his chess understanding, using his own brain. His opening repertoire has been prepared for him, the program of the studying of the classics is ready too, the work upon the endgame technique has been done and thoroughly at that. Maybe only the technique of the calculation of the variations hasn't been dealt with extensively enough. The only aspect which is not present up to now is how to analyse independently.

Now, there comes a moment in which someone might object: "What kind of method is that, in which the chess player should follow only instructions, he is not going to learn to think with his head etc.?" I would like to give the answer to this question.

The talented Soviet writer Varlam Shalamov was severely repressed, quite unfairly and unlawfully at his time, and had to spend seventeen years in labour camps. He wrote his "Kolyma Stories" as if with his blood. He wrote a nice essay

"About Prose" and here is a part of it: "There is a concept that the writer should not be too familiar with the material he is writing about. The writer should be able to use the language of the readers, his works are aimed at the reader, in whose name he has decided to investigate the material. This same concept states that his understanding of the problems should not go too far astray from the moral code of his readers.

So, Orpheus had to descend to hell and Pluto had to ascend to heaven.

According to this concept, if the writer knows too well his subject he is going to defect to the side of the reader. When you change your values, you change your margins. The writer will start to judge real life by new standards, which are going to worry, frustrate and frighten the reader. The author is going to lose the rapport with his readers unavoidably.

So, the writer should pretend to be something like a tourist, a stranger and he should try to stick to the spirit of the literature, even more than necessary. You have a perfect example of such a type of writer-tourist in Hemingway, no matter – he must have really fought around Madrid. You can fight and lead an active life at the same time, and as a writer remain "inside" of the things, but still be "above" or "on the side".

I remember that Nimzovitch wrote somewhere that he thinks the right way to teach the novice is to teach him about weak squares, blockade and some other sophisticated material, instead of combinations, playing sharp openings, enterprising, anticipating simple manoeuvres by the opponent and creation of plans; and I couldn't help but laugh. Nimzovitch, as far as everybody knows, didn't work a single day as a coach, and at his times there was not even an idea about coaches and all. In my discussions with a lot of grandmasters, I happened to hear that the most important thing was to teach the player to be able to think independently

and afterwards everything would be very easy for him. The same idea was shared by the world champion № 2 Em. Lasker, who was a great thinker, and he supposed that it was enough to give the capable player a small course of lessons in the aspect of the method of thinking and then the young player would soon reach the master's level of playing. The trouble is that this idea hasn't found its tactical realization yet, and I haven't seen a grandmaster to work constantly, day after day only with young players, lets say at the level of first degree. Now, a lot of schools have appeared, in which eminent grandmasters are giving lectures to young players, helping them analyse their games and find out their mistakes. This form of work is extremely useful particularly in these cases when the young player gets an advice how to improve constantly. Still, these grandmasters do not accomplish the everyday, persistent, patient job of the coach. Besides, the grandmasters are usually busy and with a small exception all of them remain more or less "inside", but still "above" or "on the side". It would be ridiculous for me to object against the method of teaching the young player to think independently. There will be no chess player without that. I am writing this book as a coach and as a tournament player and I have been preparing a lot of grandmasters and tens of International Masters and Masters of Sports of the USSR in the last fifteen years. The end of all work is the result and I think that to be able to achieve optimal results-the process of teaching the young player to be able to think independently should not be contrary to the process of "liquidating of his illiteracy", but to cooperate with it.

The chessplayer who has not mastered the elements of the chess culture can never be free and liberated in his thinking.

Now we come to the analyses and comments of your own games. At the beginning this work is the basic, in fact the only analytical work of the chess players I am coaching. At

first, as a principle, it is not easy at all. The chess player can not divide the essential from the second-rate, he can not understand his mistakes and he can not feel the key moments of the chess fight. Naturally, you can work together with him and in fact, do all that instead of him. That might be useful, but still his analytical capabilities, which are integrally connected with his being critical, would develop much less intensely. Therefore, I play over games with my pupils, only if they have been annotated by them beforehand. After my long experience in coaching young players, I can affirm that for the young player to annotate his own games on a decent level is the hardest thing for him. The young people, and not only the young though, like to do best what they are best capable of, so I have often seen something like a caricature of commentaries. In cases like this, you have to apply some of the methods of pedagogy on each student separately, but you have to be able to force the student to make satisfactory annotations to his own games.

At first the chess player meets with a lot of difficulties in the process of evaluation of positions. He seldom comments that the position was better and became equal, or was worse and became lost or vice-versa. How can you give him useful advices in this aspect?

I recommend him to play over the game once again slowly and to try to clarify for himself the important arguable moments. Afterwards, he should start to write comments and in the moment he reaches an unclear position he should leave aside the pen and start analysing.

He should write down the analyses he made and continue further until the next arguable moment. At the same time, he should constantly watch not to miss the moments, in which the evaluation of the position changes. If the position was equal and after some moves it became better for you, you have to try to find the opponent's mistakes with the same

eagerness with which you were looking for your own mistakes.

During the analyses, it would be useful to make some overall conclusions about your playing and that one of the opponent, avoiding bitterness in your self-criticism.

Remember that you make this comments for yourself and the only one you can deceive is you, therefore do not try to admire your plans and ideas and be frank with yourself. You don't need to include in your comments any verbal pearls like: "This was a cold shower for the aggressor" or something of the sort.

By now, you must have come to the idea that you should better at first comment the games that you lost or drew. It is easy for me to show you some examples of my own practice. All the comments I had made long ago, I left unchanged.

Machulsky – Shereshevsky Cheliabinsk 1979

1.e4 e5 2.♟f3 ♘c6 3.d4 I didn't like this move. **3...ed 4.c3.** I didn't know this opening. Generally, I am not well prepared against 1.e4 e5 2. something, except the Rui Lopez. **4...♟f6!?** The opponent obviously didn't expect that and maybe the move was not so bad after all. **5.e5 ♘d5?** This is already a mistake. After 5...♘e4 6.♟e2 f5! 7.ef d5 8.♘:d4 ♘:d4 9.cd ♠b4+ 10.♠d2 ♠:d2+ 11.♘:d2 0-0 12.♘:e4 ♞e8 the position is about equal. **6.cd ♠e7?** After 6...d6 Black is clearly worse after 7.♠b5, but there is a lot of fight left. The text move is evidently a decisive mistake. What follows next is obviously forced, but I hadn't anticipated it before. **7.♟b3 ♘b6.** If 7...♘db4 White should play not 8.d5 ♘a5 9.♟a4? ♘:d5, but simply 9.♟d1 or 8.a3. **8.d5 ♘b8.** If 8...♘a5 9.♟d1. 9.a4 d6. After 9...a5 White wins with 10.d6! and 11.♠e3. **10.e6 fe?** I saw that after 10...c6! 11.ef! ♚:f7 12.dc+ ♠e6

13. ♖e5+ de 12. ♖f3+ ♗f6 15.cb Black loses the exchange. Still, I had to play in this way, because at the end the initiative is with Black. After 15...e4! the compensation is maybe not enough, but the character of the fight is entirely different. I didn't see anything dangerous after 10...fe, so I decided that such radical measures as an exchange sacrifice were not necessary yet.

11.de d5. 11...a5 was better. **12.a5 ♖c4 13.♗:c4 dc 14.♖:c4 ♖d6 15. 0-0 ♗:e6 16.♖e2!** I had completely overlooked this move. Black's king remains in the centre now and will be subjected to a fearsome attack by all White's pieces. **16...♖c6.** 16...♗g4 would be met by 17. ♖a4.

17. ♖c3! But not 17. ♖d1, because of 17...♗c4, while after the text move White threatens 18. ♖d1 or 18. ♖b5. **17...0-0-0.** What else? **18.a6! ♗f5.** After 18...b6, White wins with 19. ♖d1, because the knight on c6 would be hanging after 19...♗c4 20. ♖:d6 ♗:e2 21. ♖:c6. In case of 18...♗g4 19.ab+ ♖b8 20. ♖a6 ♗:f3 21. ♗e3 the game would be over. **19. ♖b5.** I had overlooked this as well. **19...♖g6 20. ♖e5.** This "beauty" was far from necessary. 20. ♖:b7+ was simple and good enough.

20...♖:e5 21.ab+ ♖b8 22.♗e3 c5? In the line 22...♖f3+ 2. ♖h1 ♖d4 24. ♗:d4 ♖:d4 25. ♖:a7 ♖b6 26. ♖:b6 cb 27. ♖a8+ Black would be an exchange and a pawn down, although after 27...♖:b7 28. ♖:h8 ♖d2 White would have some technical difficulties. Now, the game is over easily.

23. ♖:a7 ♗h3 24. ♖a8+ ♖c7 25.b8♖+ ♖:b8 26. ♖d5+ ♖d6 27. ♖c5+ ♖e6 28. ♖a6+ ♖f7 29. ♖:e7+ ♖g8 30. ♖:g6 ♖g6 31. ♖a7. Black resigned.

Conclusions: bad knowledge of theory, careless, effortless playing of the opening stage, **lack of concrete approach to the position.**

It was humiliating, of course, to lose in such a way, but loses like this can be very instructive and helpful. First of all I understood that I should not be so self-conceited in my

approach to the opening preparation after 1.e4 e5, and secondly I had the idea after this game to try sometimes 5...d4!? instead of 5...d5, and I managed to do it after seventeen years in my game with Joric. The reader can find this game in the chapter "The Opening Repertoire for Black".

After the chess player reaches a certain level it forms a very useful habit for him to comment thoroughly his games. A nice example to follow is the book of Gary Kasparov "Two Matches", in which the author quite frankly in an amusing form, thoroughly acquaints the reader with all the important moments of his games with A. Karpov and the comments of the World Champion, in the analytical aspect, are considered by the majority of the chess players as nothing short of perfect. Real life shows that the young player never has enough free time. He has a lot of different occupations, studying, sports, books, different amusements and recreations and he should be very practical, if he finds a way to devote enough time to chess. I don't see any danger if he comments his games not so thoroughly, but pays attention only to the key moments of the game, but only after this player has reached a certain level and has formed the habit to analyse. During the game, when you keep the score of it, it would be very useful for you if you start taking notes on the exact time you have spent on every move, since this would enable you to notice much more easily the drawbacks of your playing. I will show you some examples of this from my practice. In my comments I am using the method of the Yugoslav "Encyclopedia of Chess Openings". The time of thinking has been noted in minutes, and the time-control was 2 and 1/2 hours for forty moves.

Shereshevsky – Kapengut, Minsk 1977

1. d4 31	♟f6 30
2. ♟f3 31	g6 30
3. ♟c3 31	d5 31
4. ♞f4 31	♞g7 31
5. ♚d2 32	c6 46
6. h3 47	♟e4 52
7. ♟:e4 48	de 57
8. ♟e5 49	♞e6 57



Diagram 396

The move 8...♞e6 was a loss of time. Black had better play 8...♟bd7. He made the text move in a flash just out of common sense.

9. e3 53	0-0 05
10. ♞e2 07	f6 20



Diagram 397

The move 10...f6? was a positional mistake. Black thought 15 minutes over it. This was the beginning of a wrong plan based on a misjudgment of the position. 10...♟bd7 was better and would lead to an about equal position.

The move 11. ♜e8 was bad and it took Black another 8 minutes. Black had to play 11... ♖bd7. A. Kapengut hadn't seen White's 14 move which was easily explainable. The evaluation of the position leads to the conclusion that White **must** find a way to neutralize Black's attack against the strong position of the White's king.. It was probable that Black didn't like the seeming lack of clarification of White's plans. Nevertheless, he must have been sure that I didn't intend to castle long. Now Black could hardly develop his queen-side rook, because ♖d7 will be met by – ♖a5.

12.0-0	14	g5	30
13. ♖h2	16	f5	30
14. ♜e1	34	...	



Diagram 398

The move 14. ♜fe1 is very strong. After f5 – f4 White can play ef gf and ♖f1 in most of the lines and Black's position dissipates. This move was made after 18 minutes of thinking. I didn't find it immediately and the other moves couldn't satisfy me. In fact, I didn't use the excellent

system to number moves – candidates first. It is curious that Black responded with b7 – b6 immediately. It was worth considering 14... ♜c8 15. ♜b4 ♖f6 with the idea to organize the coordination of the pieces, but Kapengut was not the man to acknowledge his mistakes easily.

14...		b6	30
15. ♖e5	41	♙:e5	30
16. ♗:e5	42	♘d7	30
17. ♗h2	43	♚f7	45



Diagram 399

It took Kapengut 15 minutes to play 17...♚f7. This was the most difficult moment for him – the time to choose the plan. His plan was wrong however, since it was based on a superficial evaluation of the position and basically on calculations of variations. 17...♚f7 was a good move. Black creates the

positional threat ♗c4, which was parried by White calmly. White's plan includes the idea to disrupt the enemy position on the queen-side with a2 – a4 – a5.

18.b3	46	c5	48
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18...c5? was a real positional blunder. White could have only dreamed about the opening of the queen-side. Black had to play passively, i.e. ♖f6, ♗fd8, ♗ac8 etc. It seemed to me that it was all the same to Black what he played. What he wanted seemed to be to open the game as soon as possible and to start the calculation-game.

19. ♗ad1	52	cd	50
20. ♚:d4	52	♗fc8	58
21. ♗d2	56	♚f6	08
22. ♚:f5	01	♘:f6	08
23. ♗ed1	03	♚f7	08
24. ♗a6	15.	...	



Diagram 400

24...	Bc5	10
25.c4	16	Bg8 10
26.b4	24	B:c4 22.



Diagram 401

27. A:c4	25	A:c4	22
28. Ae5	25	d5	22
29. B:d5	28	A:d5	22
30. B:d5	28	e6	22
31. Bb5	29	a6	22
32. B:b6+	29	e5	22
33. B:a6	29	Bd8	22
34. Ba5+	29.	...	

The move 24. $\Delta a6$ was a mistake, mainly psychological. It was very tempting, but still not worth doing. I had to improve my position with $\Delta e5$, $\text{c}\text{f}1$, $\text{c}\text{e}1$, $c2 - c4$ etc. In this case the outcome of the game would hardly be in doubt.

I hadn't anticipated the move 26... $\text{B:c}4$. To be more precise, I didn't see 28... $\text{d}5!$ at all. When the concrete tactical game began, Kapengut changed completely and started playing very well which could hardly apply to me.



Diagram 402

The mistake 34. ♖a5+ misses the win. I had to play 34.g3. After 34... ♖d1+ 35. ♖g2 ♖d2 36.a4 the move 36...f4 wouldn't save Black because of 37.gf+ gf 38. ♖a5+ ♖f6 39.ef e3 40. ♖f3. The sudden change of the situation had a very negative effect upon me and I made the mistake in the text without

thinking.

34...		♖f6	22
35.g3	38	♖d1+	29
36. ♖g2	38	♖d2	29
37.g4	45	e6	29
38. ♖g3	50	f4+	31
39.ef	50	♖d3+	31
40. ♖g2	50	gf	31
41.g5+	52	♖g6	07

The sealed move.

42.a4	52	♖d2	08
43. ♖e5	52	e3	08
44. ♖f3	52	ef	31
45. ♖g2	53.	...	

The adjourned position was a draw. White had set a trap for Black. 44... ♖:f2+ was losing. White couldn't have achieved anything with 42. ♖e5 ♖d2 43. ♖:e4 because of 43... ♖f5.

45...		♖h5	31
45.g6+	07	Draw.	

Conclusions: The technique of calculation of variations is evidently bad. I am losing ground after a sudden change of the events on the board. Kapengut is not convincing at all, when there is nothing to calculate and the opponent has some initiative. He chooses a wrong plan when he is not

familiar with the position. Most of his time for thinking he devotes to this, but to no avail.

Presently, I consider my annotations far from perfect, but back then I wanted not only to pay attention to my playing, I wanted to find the drawbacks in the style of one of the leaders of the team of Bjelorussia – A. Kapengut. Besides, I didn't have to criticize the line 24. ♖a6, since it might have lead to the win also.

I think that it would be better if you write down some notes about your impressions of the game, right after it, to be more objective when you analyse it. You should better annotate it after some period of time, when you will be impartial and you will be able to look at it objectively, from the side. I will offer you some notes like this, which I emphasize are not annotations, but just a transcript of what I have been thinking while playing. It can be useful for you during the game to use some secret sign, for example a fullpoint to mark the moves of the opponent that you hadn't seen or anticipated at all.

Geller – Shereshevsky
Tiflis 1980

1.e4	35	e6	31
2.d4	35	d5	31
3.♟d2	35	c5	35
4.ed	35	ed	32
5.♟f3	35	e6	35

I spent three minutes on 5...a6. I wanted to check the position with an isolated pawn after 5...♟f6.

6.♞e2	37	c4	36
7. 0-0	39	♞d6	38
8.b3	40	b5	40
9.a4	50	c3	45

Playing 9...c3, I calculated lines like: 10.♞e1 cd 11.♞b5+ ♟f8 and 10.♟b1 b4. I didn't even think about the piece

sacrifice. I was so naive that after 10.ab I decided that E. Geller simply blundered a piece.

10.ab	50	cd	45
11.♟:d2	51	♞f6	23

I thought for a long time on 11...♞f6. I had calculated 11...♟b7 at first, but I didn't like it because of 12.ba ♞:a6 13.♟b5+. Geller showed me a line after the game, I had overlooked completely, 13.♟:a6 ♟:a6 (13.♟:a6? 14.♟:a6) 14.♞e2+ ♞e7 15.♞b5+ ♞d7 16.♞e2+ With a draw. Also 15.♟:a6 ♞:e2 16.♟:d6 ♞e7? (The right move is 16...♞b5) 17.♟b6 and 18.♟e1. In fact, Geller intended to play after 11...♟b7 – 12.c4 ab 13.c5 and 14.♟:b5+ which never came to my mind.

12.c4	57	♞e4	24
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I had seen 12...♞e4 much earlier and I thought White had to play 13.♟a5. I considered my task easier after the exchange on d2.

13.c5	57	♞:d2	27
14.♞:d2	00	♟e7	29
15.♟a5	25	0-0	34

As Geller mentioned after the game, 15.♟a4 was better. After 15 moves I understood I had an inferior position, but I couldn't believe it.

16.♟fa1	26	♟f6	43
17.h3	31	♟f5	45
18.b4	33	♟e8	56

I thought a long time about 18...♟e8. I calculated lines like 19.ba ♞c6 20.♟a4 ♞:d4 21.♞:d4 ♟d4 22.♞:d4 ♟:e2 with a counterplay. I didn't want to play 18...♟e4 19.♞e5, the same move I was afraid of, as early as move 17.

19.♟5a4	08	♞e7	03
20.♟1a2	17	♟b1	06
21.♟b2	20	♟e4	10
22.♟a1	28	q5	21

The move 22...g5 took me some time. I wanted to play 22...g6. In fact, I thought of playing 22...g6 and offering a draw.

23.	♖b2	32		h5	26
24.	♗h2	34		♙g6	28
25.	♗f1	41		♚d7	40

A hard move to find, though

26.	♗e3	47		♗g7	45
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I offered a draw after this move, but Geller refused.

27.	♙f3	52		♚b5	47
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I made this move with the idea to go into a calculation-game in the mutual time-scramble. I thought of playing 27...♙e4.

28.	♗:d5	54		♖a7	49
29.	♗:f6	55		♗:f6	49
30.	d5			♗bd7.	

Starting with this move we were in a time-trouble. Geller offered me a draw on move 37, but this time I refused.

31.	♚d4+			♗e5	
32.	c6			♖7a8	
33.	♙e2			♙d3	
34.	♖e1			♚c4	
35.	♚a1			♗g6	
36.	♙:d3			♗:d3	
37.	♖ed1			♗:b4	
38.	♖d2			a5	
39.	d6			♗c6	
40.	d7			♖e6	
41.	d8♚			♗:d8	

The game was adjourned, and I had sealed my last move, but afterwards we agreed to a draw.

Now lets see the thorough comments of this game, I made for the magazine "Chess and Checkers in Bjelorussia".

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2 c5 4.ed ed 5.♙f3 a6!? This is an interesting line, which is not so popular lately because of the move 5...♙c6, but to my opinion quite undeservedly.

6.♗e2. Black avoids now the typical positions with an isolated "d5" pawn, but 6.dc ♗:c7 7.♙b3 ♗e7! enabled Black to get a satisfactory position.

6...c4 7. 0-0 ♗d6 8.b3 b5 9.a4!



Diagram 403

This is a very strong move mainly from the psychological point of view. If 9.♞e1 ♙e7 10.a4 Black would play 10...♗b7 with a complicated position. White's move 9.a4 looks like a blunder, since after 9...c3 White doesn't have 10.♞e1, because of 10...cd and after 10.♙b1 b4 White's queen-

side rook and knight are cut off from the future play forever. I thought for 5 minutes and played:

9...c3 10.ab cd 11.♗:d2. In this moment I thought for about 40 minutes. White threatens to move forward his pawns obtaining a terrific pawn chain, therefore 11...♗b7 looks more logical. White has at least a draw after 12.ba ♙:a6 (12...♗:a6? 13.♗:a6 ♙:a6 14.♞:a6) 13.♗:a6 ♞:a6 14.♞e2+ ♞e7 15.♞b5+ ♞d7 16.♞e2+. I continued to think that the opponent "blundered" a piece and I was supposed to play for a win at any rate.

11...♙f6? A very grave and maybe decisive mistake. After the game in out analysis, the champion of the USSR said that he had played a lot of blitz-games in this position and he intended to meet 11...♗b7 with 12.c4?! ab 13.c5 with mutual chances for both sides.

12.c4 ♖e4. Black has no space, so he should try to exchange at least a pair of minor pieces. If 12...0-0 there would follow 13.c5 ♗e7 14.♗a5!?

13.c5 ♖:d2 14.♞:d2 ♗e7 15.♞a5?! This move is not accurate and after the right 15.♞a4! Black will hardly be able to contain the avalanche of White pawns.

15...0-0 16.♞fa1. White threatens to play b3 – b4, b5:a6 and b4 – b5 and everything will be over. Black's only chance is to find some counterplay against the d4 outpost.

16...♗f6 17.h3. 17.ba will be met by ♖c6 18.♞a4 ♗g4.

17...♗f5. The black bishop has to find a way to attack the knight on f3 at any rate.

18.b4 ♞e8! 19.♞5a4. Now you can see the consequences of the tempo-loss on move 15. If 19.ba ♖c6 20.♞a4 ♖:d4 21.♖:d4 ♗:d4 22.♞:d4 ♞:e2 with a counterplay.

19...♞e7 20.♞1a2. White could have tried 20.♗f1 ♗e4 21.ba ♗:f3 22.gf and although Black has some counter-chances on the king-side, the position favours White.

20...♗b1 21.♞b2 ♗e4 22.♞a1. Black managed somehow to defend against the first attacking wave and not to lose the game immediately. I had to play now g6 and ♞f8 – g7 next. I had overestimated my chances and played the risky:

22...g5? 23.♞ba2 h5 24.♖h2! ♗g6. The unprepared activity of Black on the king-side turned out to be only a source of trouble for him.

25.♖f1! ♞d7!? I remember that I found this move after a hard effort. It is much more difficult sometimes to move the queen to the next square than to make a move with it "across" the whole board. Moves like that have been termed as "sneaky" in the chess literature. 25...♞e4?! was not so good for Black after the simple 26.♞d1 with ♗f3 and ♖e3 next.

26.♖e3! White increases the tension preventing opponent's counterplay.

26...♗g7. The active 26...♖e4 wouldn't do anything after the simple 27.♖c2! It is worth mentioning that each opponent had about ten minutes to the rest of the time-control.

27.♠f3 ♖:b5. After this move the long positional maneuvering turns into a tactical fight. After 27...♗e4 28.♗:h5 ♖:b5 29.♗e2, followed by b4 – b5, Black wouldn't have been able to withstand the pressure.

28.♖:d5 ♖a7 29.♖:f6 ♗:f6 30.d5?!. Geller had about 5 minutes left and I had just a little more. This natural pawn move simplifies considerably Black's task, since the knight manages to join in the defence, after having been jobless for 30 moves. After 30.♖b2! White threatens to push the "d" pawn as well as ♖a5 with b4 – b5 next, and White must win.

30...♖d7 31.♗d4+ ♖e5 32.c6 ♖a8 33.♗e2 If 33.♖a5 or 33.d6 – ♖d3 comes.

33...♗d3. We started to play blitz here. The next few moves are difficult to comment, since they were made in a severe time-pressure. 34.♖e1 ♖c4 35.♖a1 ♗g6 36.♗:d3 ♖:d3 37.♖d1 ♖:b4 38.♖d2 a5 39.d6 ♖:c6 40.d7 ♖e6 41.d8♗ the time trouble was over. Black sealed the move 41.♖:d8? and the opponents agreed to a draw without resuming play.



Diagram 404

The final position requires some clarification. I sealed 41...♖:d8 and I thought that the Black's minimal material advantage compensates the exposed position of the king and after 42.♖:d8 I might find something different than 42...♖:d8. What I had played in fact enabled White to have some additional chances like 42.♖h8 with a sufficient counterplay for the pawn. The right line for Black was

41...♖:d8 42.♖:d8 ♘:d8 43.♖:d8 ♗b4! One more "sneaky" move with the queen which I hadn't seen. The queen is placed magnificently on b4: defends the "a5" pawn, controls the important squares on the first rank b1 and e1, attacks f4 and g4 squares on the fourth rank. White would have to fight for the draw because 44.♖g8+ ♘f5 45.♘h2 is not good, because of ♖e1 and ♗f4+, and after 44.♘f1 Black can play at least 44...♖b6 threatening ♗b1+.

Shereshevsky – Lputian
Tiflis 1980

1.d4	30	e6	30
2.♗f3	30	d5	31
3.e3	31	c5	33
4.♗d2	35	♗f6	34

I didn't want to play 4.♗d3. I didn't like 4...c4 After 4.♗d2 I was afraid of 4...♗c6 and if 5.b3 – 5...g6.

5.b3	32	6.cd	41
6.ed	38	♗b4	43
7.♗b2	43	♗e4	44
8.♗d3	47	♗a5	48

I didn't enjoy much the possibility of moves like 8...♗c3.

9.c4	48	♗:d2	06
10.♗:d2	50	dc	07
11.bc	51	♗c6	10
12.♗c2	58	e5	20.

Playing the move 12.♗c2 I didn't see 12...e5, and saw it only afterwards. I thought 13.d5 necessary. I was calculating 13.a3 ♗:d2+ 14.♗:d2 ♗:d2+ 15.♘:d2, but I gave it up, because of 15...ed. I didn't see the line mentioned by S. Lputian after the game: 13.de ♗:e5 14. 0-0 ♗:d3 15.♗:d3 ♗:d2 16.♗:g7 ♖g8 17.♗:h7. This line is of course far from forced, but still he intended to play 13...♗e6 and if 14.a3 ♗:d2 15.♗:d2 ♗:d2+ 16.♘:d2 0-0-0.

13.d5	03	♟d4	33
14.♙:d4	04	ed	33
15.♚d1	05	♙g4	36
16.f3	07	♙d7	36
17.0-0	08	♙a4	37
18.♟b3	10	♚c7	38
19.♚e2+	35	♟f8	41

I didn't see the manoeuvre of the Black bishop to a4. After move 18 I evaluated the position and I came to the conclusion – my position was worse. I lost a lot of time to find for me in the line: 18.♙b5 g6 19.♚e4+ ♚e7 20.♚:d4 0-0 21.d6 ♚g5 22.c5 a5 and Black is much better. The endgame after 19...♚:e7 20.♚:e7+ ♟:e7 21.♙c2 ♙:b3 seemed to me very difficult for White. After 19...♚e7 I intended to play 20.♙f2 to force Black to castle and then to exchange of e7, going to a slightly inferior endgame. The move 19...♟f8 was a pleasant surprise for me.

20.♚b2	40	♙e8	53
21.♟:d4	55	...	

I thought I was better after that

21...		♙c5	01
22.♙c2	57	♙e2	12
23.♟h1	59	♙:d4	13
24.♚b4+	01	♙c5	15
25.♚:a4	01	♚f4	70
26.♚d7	06	♙d6	22
27.♚d8+	08	♙e8	23
28.g3	09	♚h6	23

I didn't see that.

29.♚d7	15	♙:g3	28
30.h3	15	g5	33
31.♚g4	19	♙f4	36
32.♙fe1	23	♟g7	45.

After the move 32.♖f1 I considered the position equal and offered a draw.

33.c5 31 ...

I thought over this move rather long studying the line 33...♗c8 34.c6 bc 35.d6 and I came to the conclusion that I was OK. I was feeling intuitively that I had to keep two pairs of rooks, placing one of the rooks on the first rank and the other on the second.

33... ♖:e1+ 47

34.♖:e1 36 ♗f6 47

35.♗f5 35 ♗c3 49.

The move 35.♗f5 was simply a blunder. I thought that Black can not play 35...♗c3, because of 36.♖e7, but I had forgotten that the pawn on "f3" remains defenseless

36.♗e4 44 ♗:c5 50

37.♖g2 45 ♗c7 55

38.♗f5 46 ♗d8 57

I hadn't seen this move. I had expected 38...h6, after which I intended to play 39.♖e2 and if 39...♗d6 – 40.♖f1. Lputian was afraid of 39.♖e6 after 38...h6.

39.♖e8 50 ♖:e8 57

40.♗h7+ 50 ♗f6 59

41.♗f5+ 51 Draw.

Notes like this, made right after the game, enable you to understand your mistakes better and to make the correct conclusions about the drawbacks of your playing, when you annotate your games calmly back home. Afterwards you start looking for the ways to improve.

Finally, I would like to share with you the following observation. The majority of the young players, I have been coaching are excellent analytics. P. Korzubov, A. Kovalev, A. Alexandrov could easily cope with every kind of analytical problem. Life taught them that. They had to meet a lot of strong opponents and in the opening stage they were co-

nfronted with plenty of new problems they had to solve independently. To work with girls however was much harder. After my experience with Elena Zayac, I can say that her opening repertoire, which at first was modified as early as the level of the first degree, had not changed substantially up to now. She used to obtain good positions, with fair perspectives at all levels of competitions, the Interzonal tournament included. When women play chess the intensity of the conflict in the opening is less than in men's chess, therefore there is not any incentive to a serious analytical work. Far back in time, E. Zayac and A. Alexandrov had an approximately equal practical strength and they played training games in 1988 which were full of an intense, levelled fight. Now, the trains they have taken are going in different directions. If we disregard the difference in the physiological capabilities of the female and male body, I think that the margin between their relative strength was caused not so much by the scope of their chess talents, or the difference of the opposition. E. Zayac used to play in a lot of men's tournaments, against strong opponents in 1988 and 1989; tournaments of the same class as those A. Alexandrov played. I think that the margin was caused mainly by the difference of their approach to the independent analytical work.